TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA
TURTLES
THE IDW COLLECTION V4

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA
TURTLES
THE IDW COLLECTION V4

Become our fan on Facebook **facebook.com/idwpublishing**
Follow us on Twitter **@idwpublishing**
Subscribe to us on YouTube **youtube.com/idwpublishing**
See what's new on Tumblr **tumblr.idwpublishing.com**
Check us out on Instagram **instagram.com/idwpublishing**

ISBN: 978-1-63140-820-5 20 19 18 17 1 2 3 4

COVER ART BY
DAN DUNCAN

SERIES EDITS BY
BOBBY CURNOW

COLLECTION EDITS BY
JUSTIN EISINGER
AND ALONZO SIMON

PUBLISHER
TED ADAMS

COLLECTION DESIGN BY
GILBERTO LAZCANO

nickelodeon

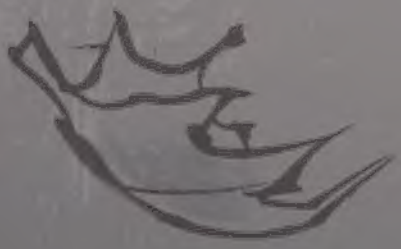
Special thanks to Joan Hilty and
Linda Lee for their invaluable assistance.

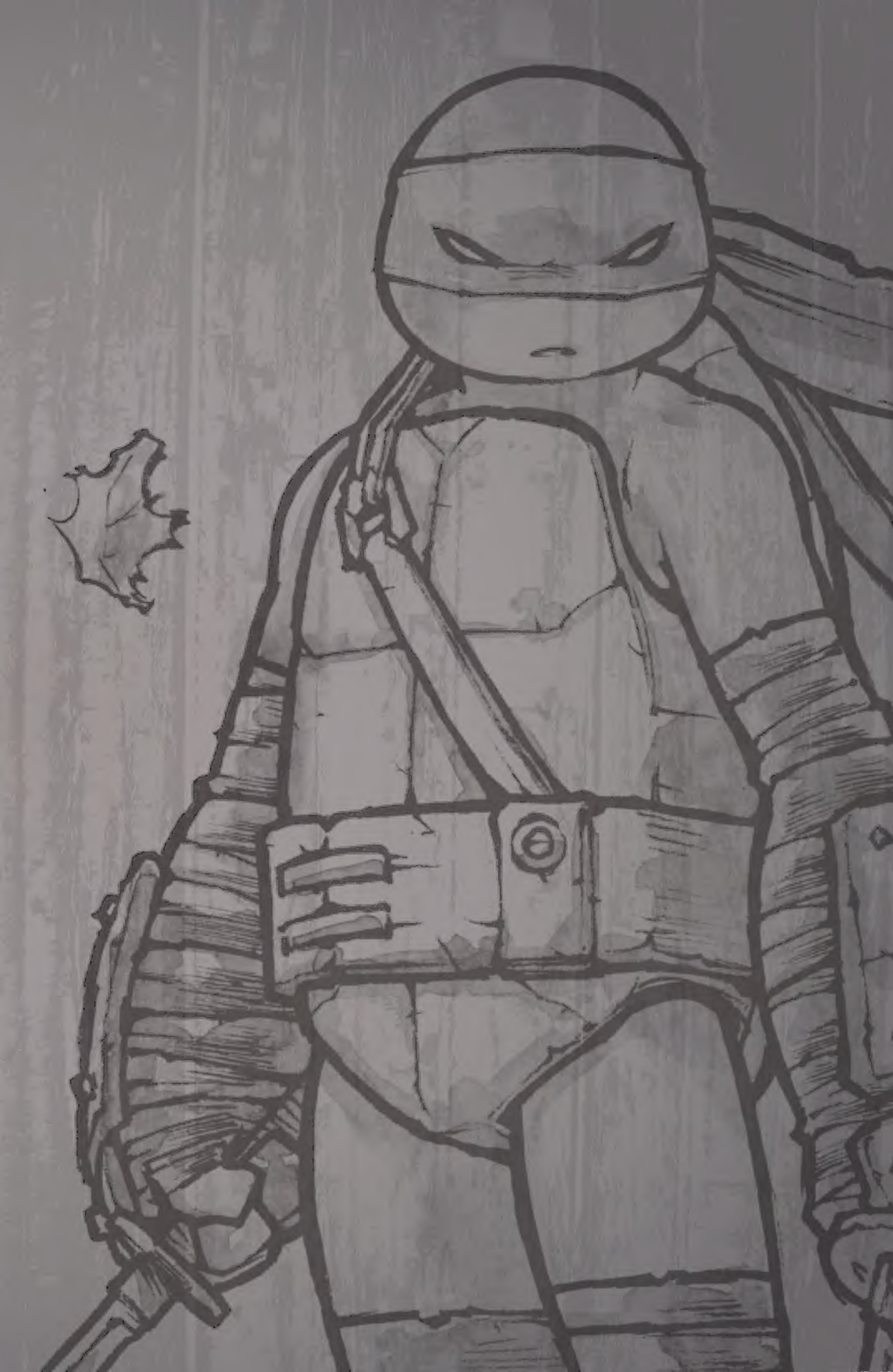
TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES: THE IDW COLLECTION, VOLUME 4. JANUARY 2017. FIRST PRINTING. © 2017 Viacom International Inc. All Rights Reserved. Nickelodeon, TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES, and all related titles, logos and characters are trademarks of Viacom International Inc. © 2017 Viacom Overseas Holdings C.V. All Rights Reserved. Nickelodeon, TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES, and all related titles, logos and characters are trademarks of Viacom Overseas Holdings C.V. Based on characters created by Peter Laird and Kevin Eastman. © 2017 Idea and Design Works, LLC. The IDW logo is registered in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. IDW Publishing, a division of Idea and Design Works, LLC. Editorial offices: 2765 Truxtun Road, San Diego, CA 92106. Any similarities to persons living or dead are purely coincidental. With the exception of artwork used for review purposes, none of the contents of this publication may be reprinted without the permission of Idea and Design Works, LLC. Printed in Korea. IDW Publishing does not read or accept unsolicited submissions of ideas, stories, or artwork.

Originally published as TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES issues #29-37, TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES: UTROM EMPIRE issues #1-3, and TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES ANNUAL 2014.

Ted Adams, CEO & Publisher
Greg Goldstein, President & COO
Robbie Robbins, EVP/Sr. Graphic Artist
Chris Ryall, Chief Creative Officer
David Hedgecock, Editor-in-Chief
Laurie Windrow, Sr. VP of Sales & Marketing
Matthew Ruzicka, CPA, Chief Financial Officer
Dirk Wood, VP of Marketing
Lorelei Bunjes, VP of Digital Services
Jeff Webber, VP of Digital Publishing & Business Development
Jerry Bennington, VP of New Product Development

For international rights, please contact
licensing@idwpublishing.com





ISSUE #29 ..... pg 06
story by KEVIN EASTMAN, BOBBY CURNOW & TOM WALTZ
script by TOM WALTZ art by SOPHIE CAMPBELL
colors by RONDA PATTISON letters by SHAWN LEE

UTROM EMPIRE #1 ..... pg 30
script by PAUL ALLOR art by ANDY KUHN
colors by BILL CRABTREE letters by SHAWN LEE

ISSUE #30 ..... pg 54
story by KEVIN EASTMAN. BOBBY CURNOW & TOM WALTZ
script by TOM WALTZ art by SOPHIE CAMPBELL
colors by RONDA PATTISON letters by SHAWN LEE

UTROM EMPIRE #2 .....pg 78
script by PAUL ALLOR art by ANDY KUHN
colors by BILL CRABTREE letters by SHAWN LEE

ISSUE #31 .....pg 102
story by KEVIN EASTMAN. BOBBY CURNOW & TOM WALTZ
script by TOM WALTZ art by SOPHIE CAMPBELL
colors by RONDA PATTISON letters by SHAWN LEE

ISSUE #32.....pg 126
story by KEVIN EASTMAN. BOBBY CURNOW & TOM WALTZ
script by TOM WALTZ art by SOPHIE CAMPBELL
colors by RONDA PATTISON letters by SHAWN LEE

UTROM EMPIRE #3.....pg 150
script by PAUL ALLOR art by ANDY KUHN
colors by BILL CRABTREE letters by SHAWN LEE

ANNUAL 2014 .....pg 174
story by KEVIN EASTMAN & TOM WALTZ
script & art by KEVIN EASTMAN
colors by RONDA PATTISON letters by SHAWN LEE

ISSUE #33 .....pg 224
story by KEVIN EASTMAN, BOBBY CURNOW & TOM WALTZ
script by TOM WALTZ art by MATEUS SANTOLOUCO
colors by RONDA PATTISON letters by SHAWN LEE

ISSUE #34.....pg 248
story by KEVIN EASTMAN, BOBBY CURNOW & TOM WALTZ
script by TOM WALTZ art by MATEUS SANTOLOUCO
colors by RONDA PATTISON letters by SHAWN LEE

ISSUE #35.....pg 272
story by KEVIN EASTMAN, BOBBY CURNOW & TOM WALTZ
script by TOM WALTZ art by MATEUS SANTOLOUCO
and MIKE HENDERSON (page 3) colors by RONDA PATTISON
letters by SHAWN LEE

ISSUE #36 .....pg 296
story by KEVIN EASTMAN, BOBBY CURNOW & TOM WALTZ
script by TOM WALTZ art by MATEUS SANTOLOUCO, MARK
TORRES (page 1, 12, & 13) and CORY SMITH (page 22)
colors by RONDA PATTISON letters by SHAWN LEE
"The Pied Piper of Hamelin" (1842) written by ROBERT BROWNING

ISSUE #37 .....pg 320
story by KEVIN EASTMAN, BOBBY CURNOW & TOM WALTZ
script by TOM WALTZ art by CORY SMITH
colors by RONDA PATTISON letters by SHAWN LEE

art by SOPHIE CAMPBELL

ISSUE #29

"I'VE BEEN IN SOME NASTY BRAWLS IN MY TIME, BUT *THAT* THING? DAMN."
"I KNOW—JUST WHEN YOU THINK THINGS CAN'T GET ANY CRAZIER..."
"I HATED HAVIN' TO CUT OUT LIKE THAT. I... I FEEL LIKE A COWARD."
"BUT WHAT *ELSE* COULD WE DO? REALLY? IF WE'D STAYED, THEY WOULD'VE HUNTED US DOWN, YOU KNOW THAT. WE'RE LUCKY WE GOT AWAY AT ALL."
SECOND TIME AROUND
CLOSED
"YEAH, YOU'RE RIGHT—IT COULDA BEEN WAY WORSE. 'LEAST NO ONE GOT KILLED."

"NO. BUT SOME OF US CAME WAY TOO CLOSE.
"ALL THAT VIOLENCE...
STOCK GEN
"...IT WAS TOO MUCH. TOO SCARY.
"NEW YORK'S NOT A SAFE PLACE FOR ANY OF US RIGHT NOW—IF IT *EVER* WAS. AS MUCH AS WE ALL HATE THE IDEA...
"...WE'VE GOT TO PUT IT WAY BEHIND US FOR A WHILE."

THANKS FOR DRIVING, CASEY--MY HANDS WERE SHAKING TOO MUCH TO HOLD THE STEERING WHEEL. IS IT HURTING YOUR SIDE?
NAH, IT'S COOL, APRIL. WITH DONNIE'S STITCH-UP JOB, IT'S FEELING BETTER THAN WHEN I WAS IN THE HOSPITAL.
ANYWAYS, IT KEEPS ME FROM THINKIN' ABOUT... WELL, YOU KNOW.
YOUR DAD?
YEAH.
I JUST NEED SOME SERIOUS SHUT-EYE TO GET MY BODY FIXED AND MY HEAD TOGETHER.
YEAH, I THINK WE ALL NEED THAT RIGHT NOW...
...LOTS OF REST.
LOTS OF HEALING.
MMMF... MFF. WHY ARE WE SLOWIN' DOWN?
ARE WE THERE YET?
YEP, MIKEY...

...WE'RE HERE.

OH, MAN, IT FEELS SO GOOD TO STRETCH.
I CAN ONLY IMAGINE HOW FATHER'S FEELING. HIS LEG'S IN PRETTY BAD SHAPE.
HIM AND LEO ARE STILL CONKED OUT I SAY WE LET 'EM SLEEP A LITTLE MORE—WE CAN UNLOAD WITHOUT 'EM.
WHOA, APRIL... IS THIS WHERE YOUR PARENTS LIVE?
NO, MIKEY, THEY'RE IN THE MAIN HOUSE, DOWN THE DRIVE.
THIS...
SSHHHMM
...IS WHERE YOU'LL BE STAYING.
WELL, AT LEAST IT AIN'T UNDERGROUND.
YEAH—WISH I COULD GIVE YOU GUYS SOMETHING A LITTLE MORE COMFY, BUT I'M ALREADY PUSHING THINGS WITH MY PARENTS BY BRINGING CASEY.
THROW IN FOUR TURTLE-MEN AND A GIANT RAT-MAN AND, WELL... NO OFFENSE, BUT...
DON'T SWEAT IT, APRIL—THIS WORKS GREAT. THANKS.

WE'VE GOT PLENTY OF CAMPING GEAR AND LOTS OF SPACE FOR YOU GUYS TO SPREAD OUT. THERE'S ELECTRICITY AND EVEN A SMALL BATHROOM WITH RUNNING WATER. NO SHOWER, THOUGH... SORRY.
BUT THE LAKE'S SUPER CLEAN—I USED TO WASH MY HAIR IN THERE ALL THE TIME WHEN I WAS A KID.
DIDN'T YOU TELL ME YOUR PARENTS LIVED IN ALBANY?
THEY DO. MY DAD INHERITED THIS OLD PLACE AFTER MY GRANDMA O'NEIL PASSED AWAY.
HE AND MY MOM WERE ALWAYS GOING TO RETIRE HERE.
BUT, AFTER HIS STROKE, MY MOM FIGURED THE FRESH COUNTRY AIR MIGHT HELP HIM RECUPERATE FASTER.
AND WITH EVERYTHING WE WENT THROUGH IN NEW YORK, I THOUGHT IT MIGHT DO US ALL SOME GOOD, TOO.
BATHROOM'S FREE IF ANYONE'S GOTTA GO.
SO MUCH FOR FRESH AIR.
EW.

ANYWAY, WE BETTER WAKE UP SPLINTER AND LEO. MY PARENTS WERE EXPECTING US HALF AN HOUR AGO AND I DON'T WANT TO MAKE THEM WORRY.
AND LISTEN, THE HOUSE IS FAR ENOUGH AWAY THAT I HOPE THEY WON'T NOTICE YOU HERE. BUT YOU'VE GOT TO STAY HIDDEN, OKAY?
YOU GOT IT, APRIL—WE'LL STAY COMPLETELY INCONSPICUOUS.
YEAH...
... SNEAKY AND SILENT'S WHAT WE DO.
I JUST HOPE BEIN' HERE HELPS LEO GET BETTER. HE'S SO MESSED UP—LIKE ONE SECOND HE REMEMBERS US, THEN THE NEXT IT'S LIKE WE'RE HIS WORST ENEMIES OR SOMETHIN'.
HIS BEHAVIOR IS CONSISTENT WITH WHAT I'VE READ ABOUT BRAINWASHING. SHREDDER SERIOUSLY GOT IN HIS HEAD SOMEHOW, SO WE'RE GONNA HAVE TO KEEP AN EYE ON HIM—WATCH FOR RELAPSES, STUFF LIKE THAT.
SORRY TO WAKE YOU, SENSEI.
APRIL'S GOTTA GO SEE HER PARENTS NOW.
YOU NEED NOT APOLOGIZE, MY SONS—I AM FINE. WE MUST FOCUS OUR CONCERNS ON LEONARDO...
"...HIS HAS BEEN AN EXTREMELY TRAUMATIC JOURNEY."
YO... LEO. TIME TO WAKE UP, BUDDY.
WHO-?!
WHOA, WHOA... CHILL, BRO. IT'S JUST ME—RAPH. REMEMBER?
RAPH? WHERE... HOW...?

LET ME OUT.
SURE...
...NO PROBLEM.
WHAT THE--?
IS THAT...?
OH, HELL NO!
SHINK

STINKIN' MUTT!
WAIT, I—
WHOP
TRYIN' TO AMBUSH US, HUH?
NO... YOU'RE WRONG. I DON'T WANT TO FIGHT.
YEAH... RIGHT.
NOW TELL ME WHO'S WITH YOU BEFORE I—
UFF!
BACK OFF! SHE SAID SHE DOESN'T WANT TO FIGHT!
UHH... WHY'S LEO YELLIN' AT RAPH?
AND WHERE THE HECK DID ALOPEX COME FROM?!
SO MUCH FOR SNEAKY AND SILENT.

LEO, WHAT THE HELL'RE YOU DO N'? SHE WAS JUST ABOUT TO SNEAK ATTACK YOU A FEW SECONDS AGO.
NO—SHE WASN'T. DIDN'T YOU HEAR HER? CAN'T YOU SEE SHE'S HURT BAD?
YEAH, WELL, A LOT OF US ARE HURTIN' RIGHT NOW, BUT ONLY ONE OF US IS FOOT CLAN SCUM.
UNLESS...
UNLESS WHAT?
I DUNNO, BRO—YOU TELL ME. YOU'RE THE ONE STILL PROTECT N' SHREDDER'S LITTLE FLEABAG.
THIS HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH SHREDDER!
YOU SURE?
RAGH!
HRK!
OH, GREAT.
C'MON, MIKEY! AND KEEP YOUR EYES PEELED FOR MORE FOOT!
AW, MAN...

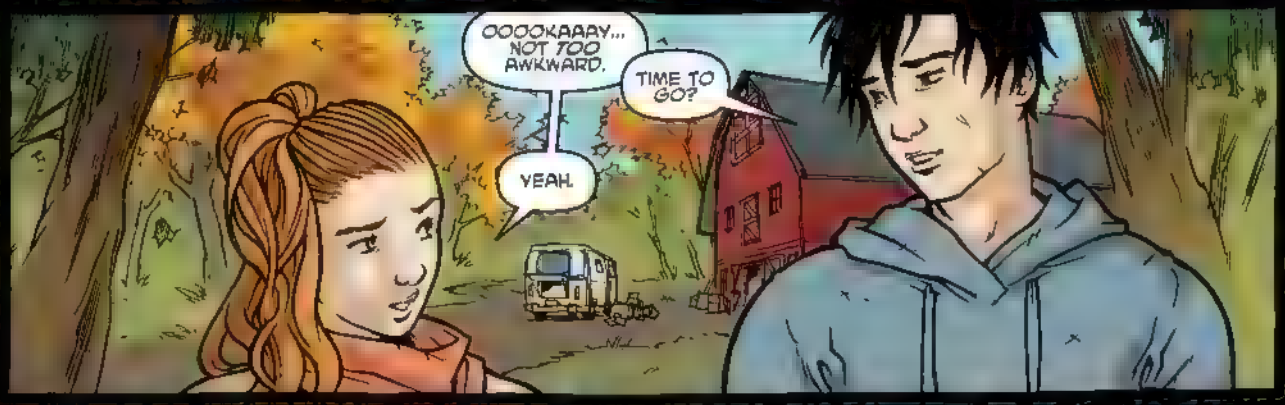
GRAHH!
LOOK AT YOU, LEO! FIRST YOU STICK UP FOR THE FOOT MUTT, NOW YOU'RE TRYIN' TO WASTE ME!
WHY IS THAT, HUH?!
KNOCK IT OFF, RAPH!
YEAH, GUYS—THIS IS STUPID!
DON'T TOUCH ME!
I'M JUST TRYIN' TO HELP, DUDE.
DAMMIT, DONNIE! GET OFFA ME!
THEN QUIT BEING AN IDIOT.
ENOUGH!
THAT IS ENOUGH, MY SONS.
BUT, MASTER, THE FOOT MIGHT—
DO AS I SAY AND STAND DOWN. ALOPEX IS OBVIOUSLY ALONE AND OUTNUMBERED.

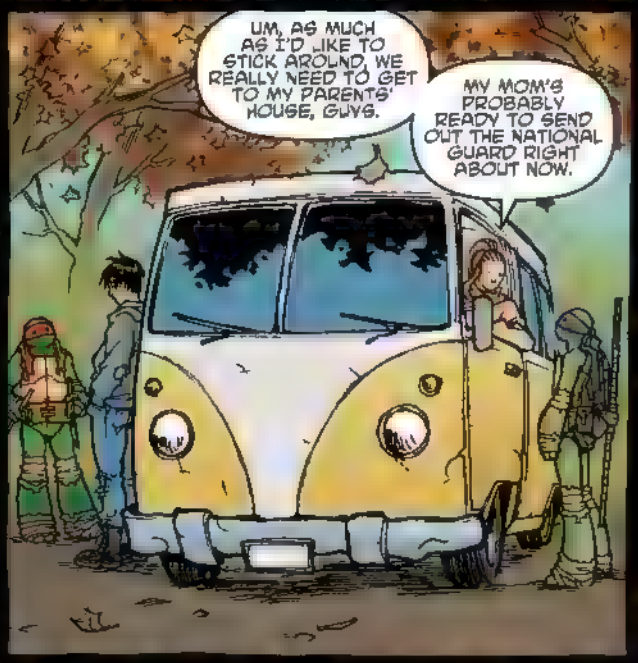
MISS O'NEIL GRACIOUSLY INVITED US TO THIS PLACE IN ORDER TO PROVIDE US WITH MUCH-NEEDED SANCTUARY.
I WILL *NOT* HAVE YOU OFFENDING OUR HOST AND DISHONORING YOURSELVES BY CONTINUING THE CONFLICT WE ARE ATTEMPTING TO LEAVE BEHIND.
FINE.
AND AS FOR *YOU*, ALOPEX...
...I, TOO, AM CURIOUS HOW IT IS YOU HAVE COME TO BE HERE WITH US—AND WHY.
HOWEVER, I WILL ALLOW YOU THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPLAIN YOURSELF, AS YOU DID INTERVENE DURING MY BATTLE WITH OROKU SAKI.*
BUT, SENSEI, SHE—
SILENCE, RAPHAEL.
* LAST ISSUE #

LOOK... YOU HATE ME... YOU DON'T TRUST ME... I *GET* IT. I KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENED BETWEEN US BUT...
...WHETHER YOU BELIEVE ME OR NOT, I'M NOT FOOT ANYMORE.
"YOU KNOW EXACTLY WHAT HAPPENED. I ATTACKED SHREDDER.
"BUT I WASN'T ABLE TO KILL HIM... AND I KNEW I HAD TO ESCAPE.
"I JUST DIDN'T KNOW WHERE TO GO. THE FOOT CLAN WAS ALL I HAD.
"BUT I DIDN'T NEED KARAI'S ARROW IN MY ARM TO REMIND ME I WAS AS GOOD AS DEAD TO THE FOOT.
"SO, I FOLLOWED YOU."

"I HEARD YOU ALL TALKING... HEARD YOU SAY YOU WERE LEAVING THE CITY.
"SO, I MADE A CHOICE.
"IF THE FOOT WANTED TO KILL ME...
"...THEY'D HAVE TO CATCH ME FIRST."
I DON'T CARE IF YOU THINK I'M LYING, I REALLY DON'T WANT TO FIGHT.
NOT ANYMORE.
WAIT— WHAT I DON'T UNDERSTAND IS *WHY* YOU ATTACKED SHREDDER IN THE FIRST PLACE. WHAT WAS IN IT FOR YOU?
HE MURDERED MY FAMILY.

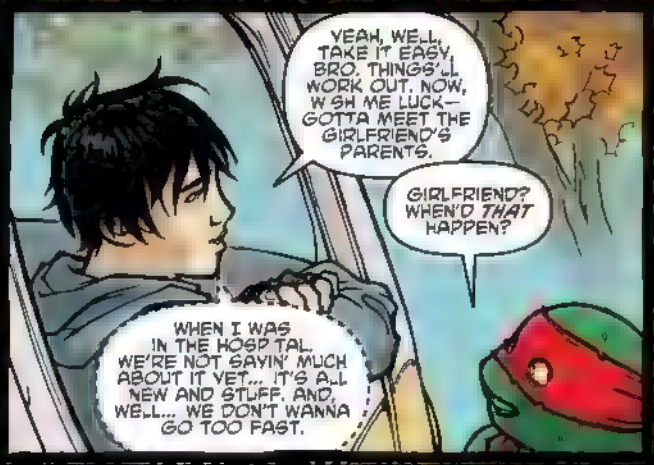
YOU EXPECT US TO BELIEVE THAT LOAD OF CRAP?! I'VE HEARD THIS WHOLE "POOR LITTLE VICTIM FOX" SOB STORY FROM YOU BEFORE.
SHE'S TELLING THE TRUTH, I... I KNOW SHE IS.
THAT WHY YOU'RE SO HOT TO PROTECT HER, THEN?
WHAT AREN'T YOU TELLIN' US, LEO?
DON'T EVEN—
STOP!
I WILL NOT TOLERATE THIS CHILDISH BEHAVIOR! YOU WILL BOTH CEASE NOW.
SAVE YOUR COMMANDS, YOSHI...
...YOU'RE NOT MY MASTER.
VERY WELL.
ALOPEX, WHETHER OR NOT YOU SPEAK TRULY ABOUT SHREDDER, YOU DID SAVE MY LIFE, AND I AM HONOR-BOUND TO RESPECT THAT FACT. IN THE SPIRIT OF BUSHIDO, I ACCEPT YOUR CALL FOR A TRUCE. WE WILL NOT HARASS YOU ANY FURTHER.
BUT, FATHER—
MY DECISION IS FINAL.
DOESN'T MATTER...
...I DON'T NEED YOUR HONOR OR YOUR HELP.


OOOOKAAAY... NOT TOO AWKWARD.
TIME TO GO?
YEAH.

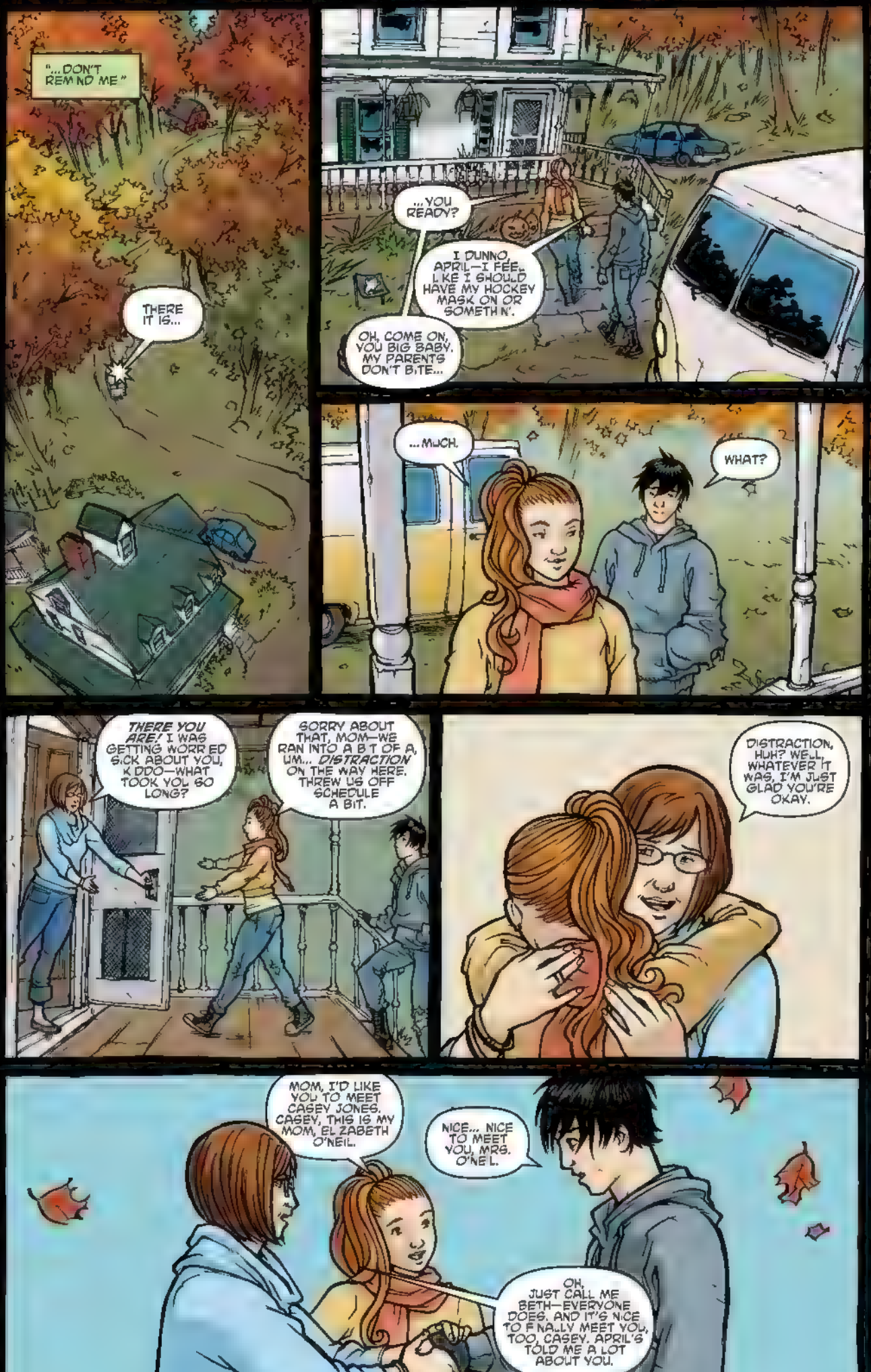

UM, AS MUCH AS I'D LIKE TO STICK AROUND, WE REALLY NEED TO GET TO MY PARENTS' HOUSE, GUYS.
MY MOM'S PROBABLY READY TO SEND OUT THE NATIONAL GUARD RIGHT ABOUT NOW.

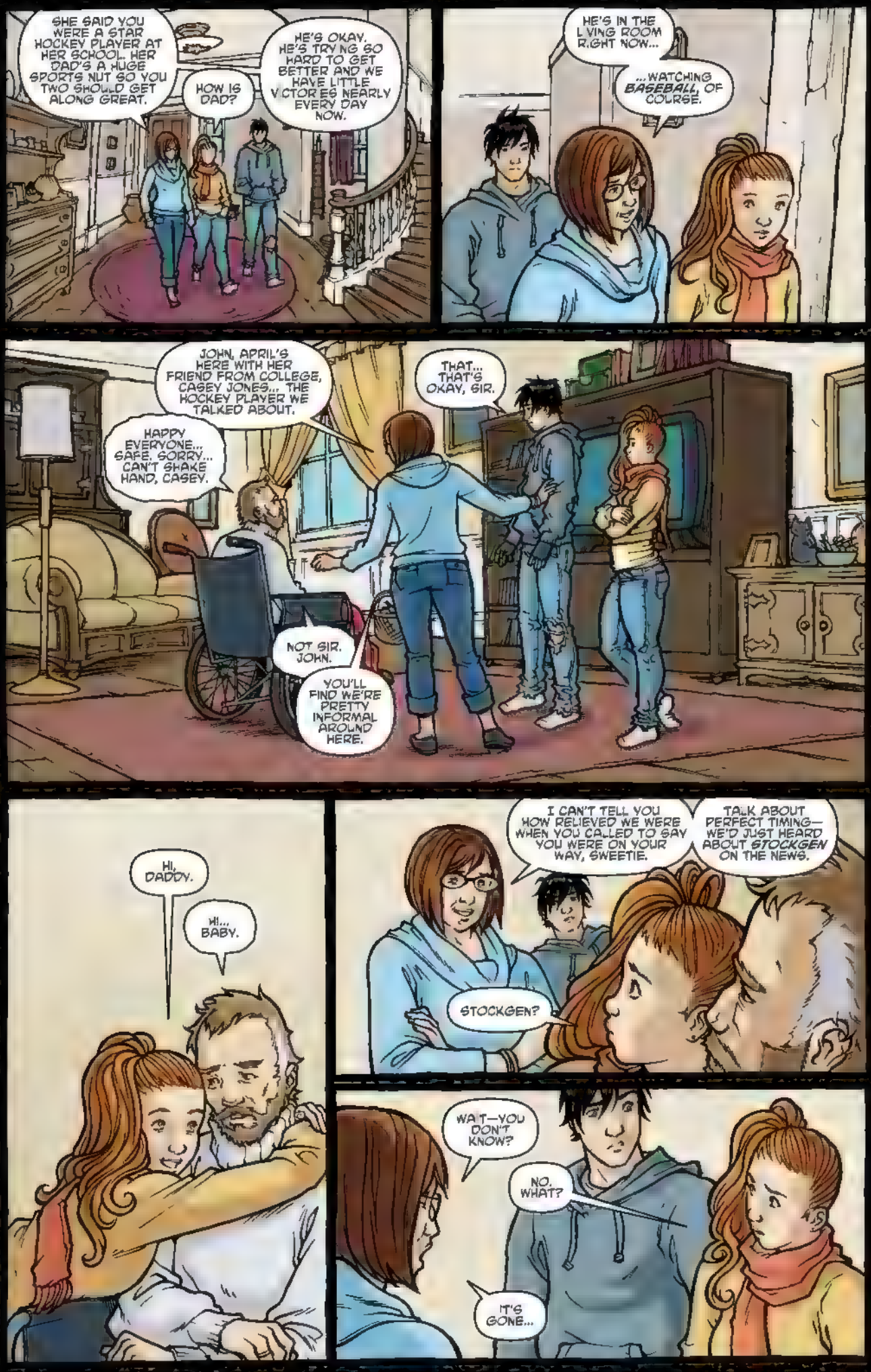
I'M REALLY SORRY ABOUT ALL THE DRAMA, APRIL.
IT'S FINE, DONNIE. WE ALL KNEW THIS WASN'T GOING TO BE EASY. JUST DON'T BURN DOWN THE BARN OR ANYTHING, OKAY?

DUDE, YOU GOTTA CUT LEO SOME SLACK. GUY'S BEEN THROUGH HELL.
I KNOW, MAN—I FEEL REALLY BAD FOR LOSIN' MY COOL WITH HIM LIKE THAT. I KNOW HE AIN'T HIMSELF RIGHT NOW...
...BUT I STILL DON'T TRUST THAT STINKIN' FLEABAG, NO MATTER WHAT PITY PARTY SHE'S TRYIN' TO THROW.

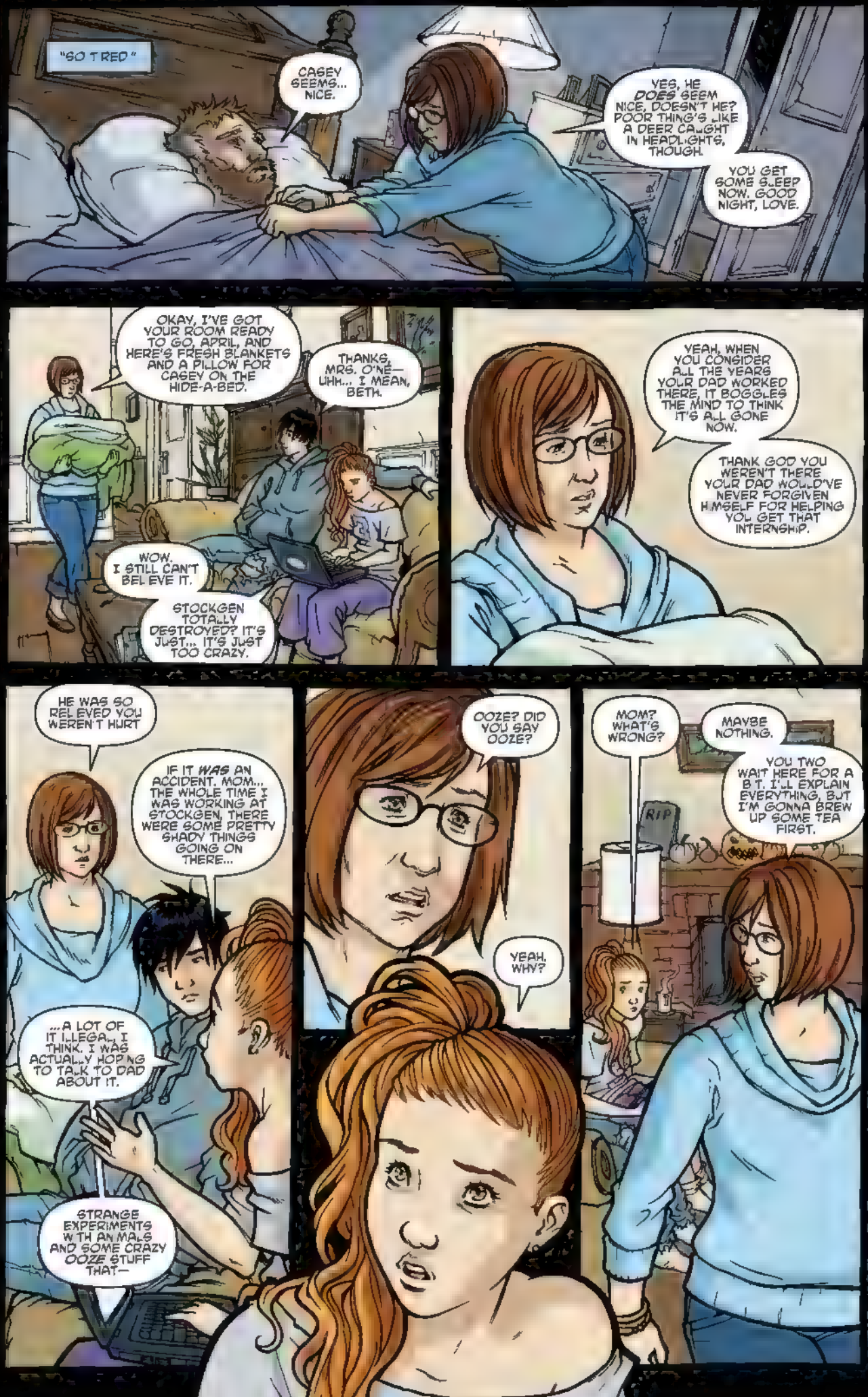

YEAH, WELL, TAKE IT EASY, BRO. THINGS'LL WORK OUT. NOW, WISH ME LUCK—GOTTA MEET THE GIRLFRIEND'S PARENTS.
GIRLFRIEND? WHEN'D THAT HAPPEN?
WHEN I WAS IN THE HOSPITAL. WE'RE NOT SAYIN' MUCH ABOUT IT YET... IT'S ALL NEW AND STUFF. AND, WELL... WE DON'T WANNA GO TOO FAST.

YEAH, AND NOTHIN' SAYS "SLOW" LIKE MEETIN' THE PARENTS.
OH, MAN...


"...DON'T REMIND ME"
THERE IT IS...
...YOU READY?
I DUNNO, APRIL—I FEEL LIKE I SHOULD HAVE MY HOCKEY MASK ON OR SOMETHIN'.
OH, COME ON, YOU BIG BABY. MY PARENTS DON'T BITE...
...MUCH.
WHAT?
THERE YOU ARE! I WAS GETTING WORRIED SICK ABOUT YOU, KIDDO—WHAT TOOK YOU SO LONG?
SORRY ABOUT THAT, MOM—WE RAN INTO A BIT OF A, UM... DISTRACTION ON THE WAY HERE. THREW US OFF SCHEDULE A BIT.
DISTRACTION, HUH? WELL, WHATEVER IT WAS, I'M JUST GLAD YOU'RE OKAY.
MOM, I'D LIKE YOU TO MEET CASEY JONES. CASEY, THIS IS MY MOM, ELIZABETH O'NEIL.
NICE... NICE TO MEET YOU, MRS. O'NEIL.
OH, JUST CALL ME BETH—EVERYONE DOES. AND IT'S NICE TO FINALLY MEET YOU, TOO, CASEY. APRIL'S TOLD ME A LOT ABOUT YOU.


SHE SAID YOU WERE A STAR HOCKEY PLAYER AT HER SCHOOL. HER DAD'S A HUGE SPORTS NUT SO YOU TWO SHOULD GET ALONG GREAT.
HOW IS DAD?
HE'S OKAY. HE'S TRYING SO HARD TO GET BETTER AND WE HAVE LITTLE VICTORIES NEARLY EVERY DAY NOW.
HE'S IN THE LIVING ROOM RIGHT NOW...
...WATCHING BASEBALL, OF COURSE.
JOHN, APRIL'S HERE WITH HER FRIEND FROM COLLEGE, CASEY JONES... THE HOCKEY PLAYER WE TALKED ABOUT.
HAPPY EVERYONE... SAFE. SORRY... CAN'T SHAKE HAND, CASEY.
THAT... THAT'S OKAY, SIR.
NOT SIR. JOHN.
YOU'LL FIND WE'RE PRETTY INFORMAL AROUND HERE.
HI, DADDY.
HI... BABY.
I CAN'T TELL YOU HOW RELIEVED WE WERE WHEN YOU CALLED TO SAY YOU WERE ON YOUR WAY, SWEETIE.
TALK ABOUT PERFECT TIMING— WE'D JUST HEARD ABOUT STOCKGEN ON THE NEWS.
STOCKGEN?
WAIT—YOU DON'T KNOW?
NO. WHAT?
IT'S GONE...

"...COMPLETELY GONE"
YOU CANNOT ESCAPE THE TRUTH.
...LIKE A MONSTER SEEKING PREY IN THE NIGHT, THE TRUTH...
...WILL HUNT YOU DOWN.
FOOL. YOU WILL DIE FOR THAT.
SEE, NOW, I'M GONNA HAVE TO ASK YOU TO CHANGE YOUR TONE, MAN. YOU SOUND JUST LIKE THAT CHUMP SHREDDER RIGHT NOW...
TRUE STRENGTH COMES FROM THE WILL TO STRIKE QUICKLY AND WITHOUT MERCY!
IN TRUTH, THE RESPONSIBILTY FOR ALL THIS SADNESS BELONGS TO ANOTHER.
WHO, MOTHER? TELL ME... PLEASE.
MY CHILD, WHEN YOU FIND THAT WHICH YOU HAVE LOST...
...YOU WILL ALSO FIND THE ANSWER TO THAT QUESTION.
MOTHER, WHERE *ARE* YOU? I NEED YOU NOW.
PLEASE... I'M SO CONFUSED.


"SO TIRED"
CASEY SEEMS... NICE.
YES, HE *DOES* SEEM NICE, DOESN'T HE? POOR THING'S LIKE A DEER CAUGHT IN HEADLIGHTS, THOUGH.
YOU GET SOME SLEEP NOW. GOOD NIGHT, LOVE.
OKAY, I'VE GOT YOUR ROOM READY TO GO, APRIL, AND HERE'S FRESH BLANKETS AND A PILLOW FOR CASEY ON THE HIDE-A-BED.
THANKS, MRS. O'NE— UHH... I MEAN, BETH.
WOW. I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE IT.
STOCKGEN TOTALLY DESTROYED? IT'S JUST... IT'S JUST TOO CRAZY.
YEAH, WHEN YOU CONSIDER ALL THE YEARS YOUR DAD WORKED THERE, IT BOGGLES THE MIND TO THINK IT'S ALL GONE NOW.
THANK GOD YOU WEREN'T THERE YOUR DAD WOULD'VE NEVER FORGIVEN HIMSELF FOR HELPING YOU GET THAT INTERNSHIP.
HE WAS SO RELIEVED YOU WEREN'T HURT
IF IT *WAS* AN ACCIDENT. MOM... THE WHOLE TIME I WAS WORKING AT STOCKGEN, THERE WERE SOME PRETTY SHADY THINGS GOING ON THERE...
...A LOT OF IT ILLEGAL, I THINK. I WAS ACTUALLY HOPING TO TALK TO DAD ABOUT IT.
STRANGE EXPERIMENTS WITH ANIMALS AND SOME CRAZY *OOZE* STUFF THAT—
OOZE? DID YOU SAY OOZE?
YEAH. WHY?
MOM? WHAT'S WRONG?
MAYBE NOTHING.
YOU TWO WAIT HERE FOR A BIT. I'LL EXPLAIN EVERYTHING, BUT I'M GONNA BREW UP SOME TEA FIRST.
RIP

"THE NIGHTS GET PRETTY COLD HERE.
"...SO WE'LL NEED SOMETHING TO KEEP US WARM WHILE WE TALK.
"I'VE GOT SOMETHING TO SHARE WITH YOU.
"LIKE I SAID, IT MIGHT BE IMPORTANT, OR IT MIGHT NOT."

"... EITHER WAY, IT'S TIME YOU KNEW THE TRUTH.
"TIME YOU LEARNED ABOUT SOME IMPORTANT DETAILS FROM YOUR DAD'S AND MY PAST
"SOME THINGS THAT MAY HAVE BEEN WAY MORE *DANGEROUS* THAN WE EVER REALIZED."

ART BY KEVIN EASTMAN
COLORS BY RONDA PATTISON

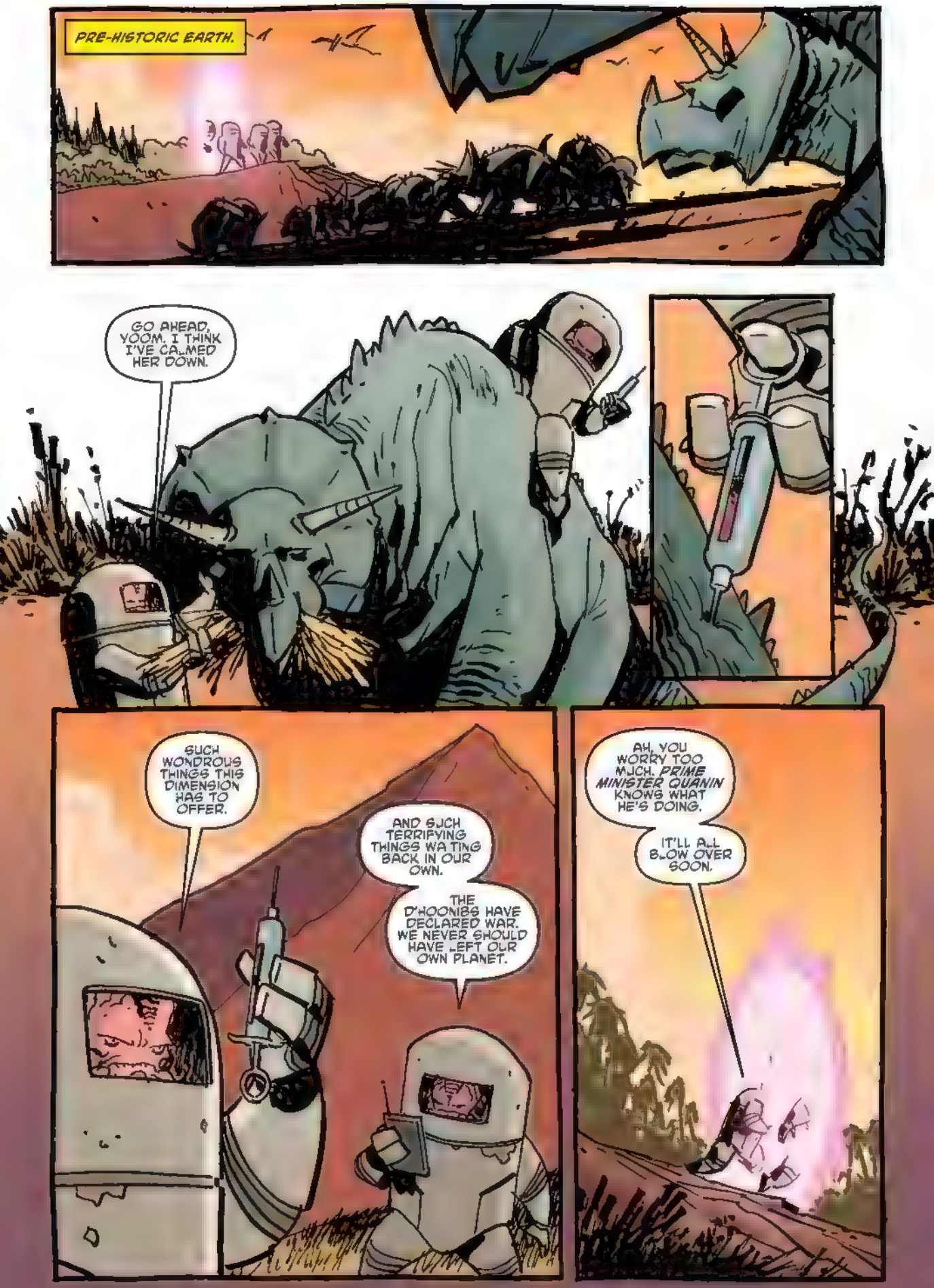
UTROM EMPIRE #1

ANDY KUHN
DANIEL "PEZ" LOPEZ

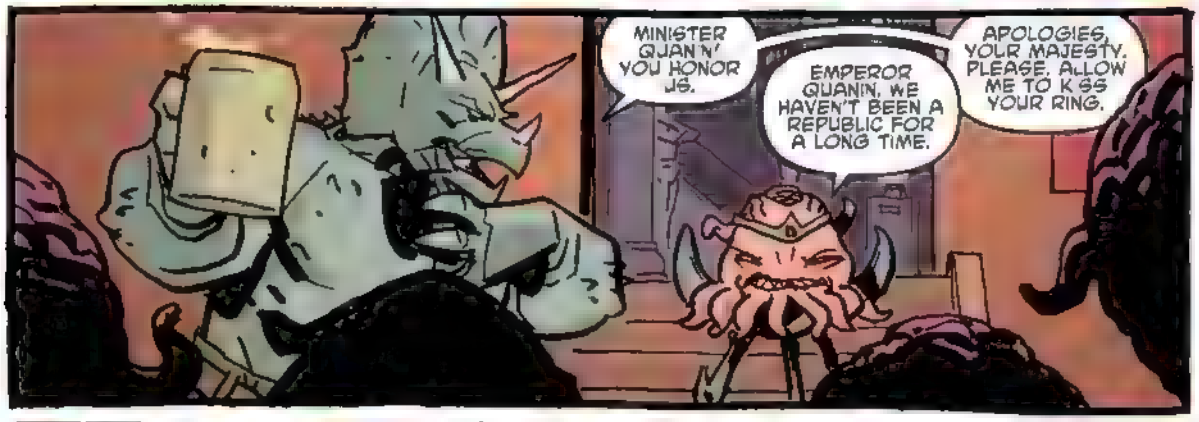
BURNOW ISLAND.
MY NAME IS HONEYCUTT. BUT NO ONE HAS CALLED ME THAT IN A LONG TIME.
FOR A WHILE I WENT BY CHET ALLEN. BUT THAT PERSON'S GONE, TOO.
NOW I'M THE FUGITOID. THE FUGITIVE ANDROID. BUT I DIDN'T BEGIN LIFE AS AN ANDROID. AND I'M NO LONGER A FUGITIVE.
I WAS A SCIENTIST. I WAS A HUSBAND AND A FATHER. I WAS EVEN A REBEL AND A SPY. BUT ALL OF THAT IS LOST. NOW I'M JUST A PRISONER. AND A PAWN
I TRIED SO HARD TO FIX THINGS. TRIED TO GATHER UP THE PIECES, AND PUT IT ALL BACK TOGETHER AGAIN.
I'M NOT A FIGHTER, BUT I STOOD UP AND FOUGHT BACK AGAINST AN INTER-DIMENSIONAL WARLORD.
I LOST.
AND NOW?

EVERYTHING'S BROKEN.

I MUST DESTROY MYSELF. ELIMINATE THIS BRAIN, AND EVERYTHING INSIDE IT.
IF I FAIL, KRANG WILL CONTINUE TO DOWNLOAD ALL MY SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE. HE'LL USE IT TO FINISH THE TECHNODROME, A MIGHTY WEAPON BUILT TO TERRAFORM THE EARTH INTO A NEW HOME FOR KRANG'S PEOPLE, KILLING EVERY HUMAN IN THE PROCESS.
I CAN'T ALLOW THAT TO HAPPEN.
I THINK THAT'S ABOUT ALL WE'RE GONNA GET BEFORE THE WORST OF THE STORM HITS. I'M GUESSING POWER GETS KNOCKED OFFLINE SOON.
WAIT— WE'RE LOSING POWER?
DON'T WORRY.
"THERE ARE BACKUPS IN PLACE FOR THE MOST VITAL SYSTEMS.
"DR. STOCKMAN HAS ASSURED US OF THAT."
YOU SAID YOU DOUBLE-CHECKED OUR STORM PREPARATIONS?
UH, Y-Y-YES SIR.
THEN *TRIPLE*-CHECK. QUADRUPLE.
THE FATE OF MY PEOPLE RESTS WITH THIS PROJECT. WE HAVE COME MUCH TOO FAR TO LET A FREAK *HURRICANE* DESTROY THE UTROM EMPIRE.


PRE-HISTORIC EARTH.
GO AHEAD, YOOM. I THINK I'VE CALMED HER DOWN.
SUCH WONDROUS THINGS THIS DIMENSION HAS TO OFFER.
AND SUCH TERRIFYING THINGS WAITING BACK IN OUR OWN.
THE D'HOONIBS HAVE DECLARED WAR. WE NEVER SHOULD HAVE LEFT OUR OWN PLANET.
AH, YOU WORRY TOO MUCH. PRIME MINISTER QUANIN KNOWS WHAT HE'S DOING.
IT'LL ALL BLOW OVER SOON.

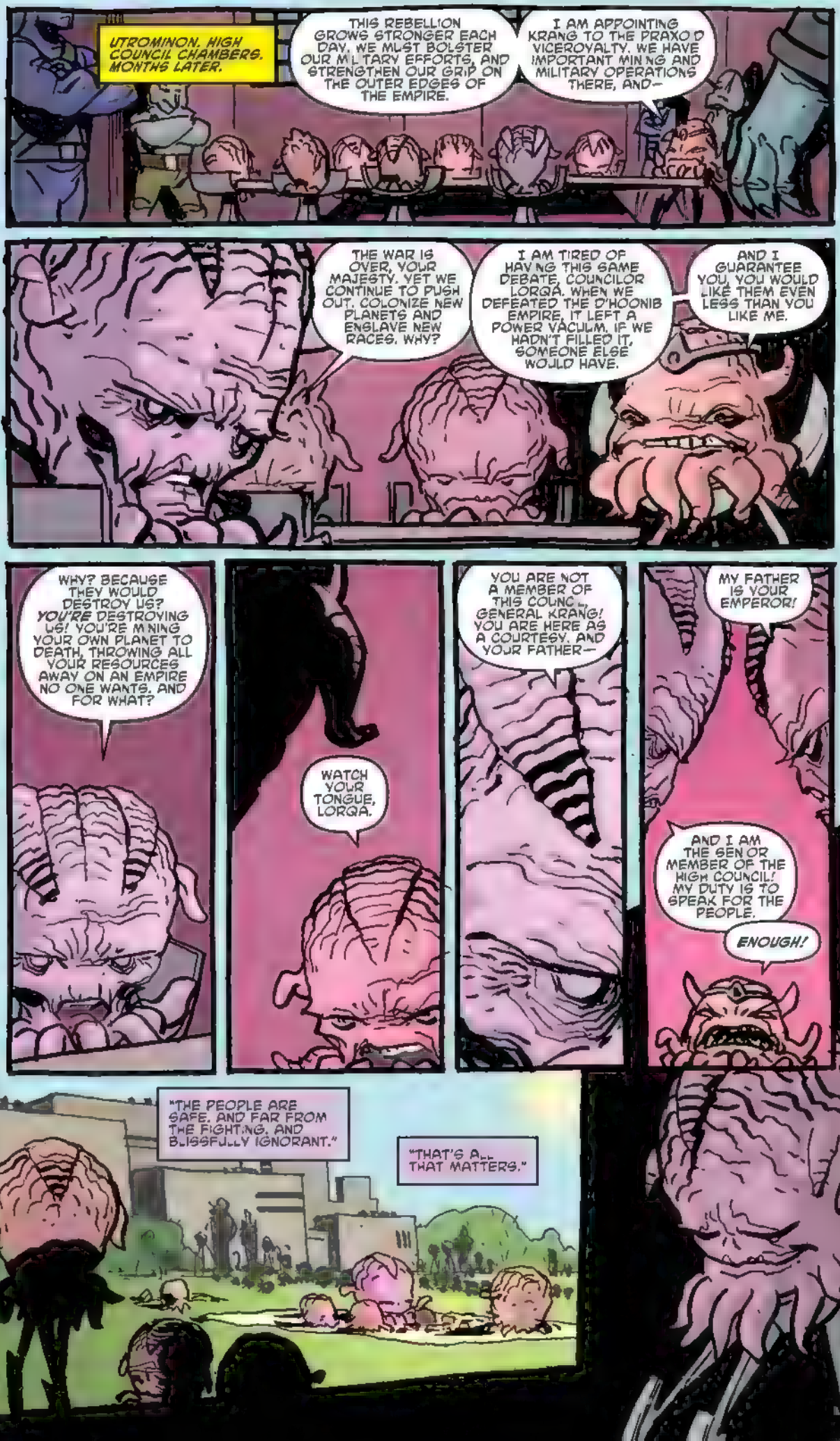
THE PLANET UTROMINON.
MANY YEARS LATER.
LET'S DRINK TO GENERAL KRANG! AND TO THE 21ST DEEP-SPACE DIVISON!
THE FIGHTING LIZARDS!
THE FIGHTING LIZARDS!


MINISTER QUANN! YOU HONOR US.
EMPEROR QUANIN, WE HAVEN'T BEEN A REPUBLIC FOR A LONG TIME.
APOLOGIES, YOUR MAJESTY. PLEASE, ALLOW ME TO KISS YOUR RING.

KRANG. I HEARD YOU WERE LOOKING FOR ME, AND THAT YOU HAVE GOOD NEWS FROM THE FRONT. HOPEFULLY SOMETHING TO JUST FY THIS... MERRIMENT.

EMPEROR QUANIN—FATHER. THE D'HOON & EMPIRE HAS SURRENDERED AND THE PRAXOID ALLIANCE IS IN TATTERS.
IN SHORT— THE UTROM EMPIRE IS AT PEACE.

DEEP SPACE. THE MOLTA VI ASTEROID FIELD.
NO LUCK. THERE IS NO OOZE—I REPEAT, NO OOZE—ON THIS ONE EITHER.
THAT'S SIX FAILED ATTEMPTS. THIS BELT IS DRY.
ROGER THAT. BUT WE HAVE TO KEEP LOOKING.
WE NEED THIS.
I HEAR YOU. COME PICK ME UP AND WE CAN—
LADIES, GENTLEMEN. THE WAR MAY BE OVER.
BUT THE REBELLION HAS BEGUN.


UTROMINON. HIGH COUNCIL CHAMBERS. MONTHS LATER.
THIS REBELLION GROWS STRONGER EACH DAY. WE MUST BOLSTER OUR MILITARY EFFORTS, AND STRENGTHEN OUR GRIP ON THE OUTER EDGES OF THE EMPIRE.
I AM APPOINTING KRANG TO THE PRAXOD VICEROYALTY. WE HAVE IMPORTANT MINING AND MILITARY OPERATIONS THERE, AND—
THE WAR IS OVER, YOUR MAJESTY. YET WE CONTINUE TO PUSH OUT, COLONIZE NEW PLANETS AND ENSLAVE NEW RACES. WHY?
I AM TIRED OF HAVING THIS SAME DEBATE, COUNCILOR LORQA. WHEN WE DEFEATED THE D'HOONIB EMPIRE, IT LEFT A POWER VACUUM. IF WE HADN'T FILLED IT, SOMEONE ELSE WOULD HAVE.
AND I GUARANTEE YOU, YOU WOULD LIKE THEM EVEN LESS THAN YOU LIKE ME.
WHY? BECAUSE THEY WOULD DESTROY US? YOU'RE DESTROYING US! YOU'RE MINING YOUR OWN PLANET TO DEATH, THROWING ALL YOUR RESOURCES AWAY ON AN EMPIRE NO ONE WANTS. AND FOR WHAT?
WATCH YOUR TONGUE, LORQA.
YOU ARE NOT A MEMBER OF THIS COUNC— GENERAL KRANG! YOU ARE HERE AS A COURTESY. AND YOUR FATHER—
MY FATHER IS YOUR EMPEROR!
AND I AM THE SENIOR MEMBER OF THE HIGH COUNCIL! MY DUTY IS TO SPEAK FOR THE PEOPLE.
ENOUGH!
"THE PEOPLE ARE SAFE, AND FAR FROM THE FIGHTING, AND BLISSFULLY IGNORANT."
"THAT'S ALL THAT MATTERS."

BURNOW ISLAND.
BLINK!

BAXTER STOCKMAN!
THE HEAD OF STOCKGEN, AND MY OLD BOSS, WHEN I WAS DISGUISED AS CHET ALLEN.
I HEARD THE SCIENTISTS SAY THAT THE STOCKGEN LABS WERE DESTROYED. HIS LIFE DESTROYED. JUST LIKE MINE. BUT I HAD NO IDEA HE WAS ON THE ISLAND.
I LIED TO THIS MAN ABOUT MY IDENTITY FOR MONTHS. IS HE HERE FOR ANSWERS? FOR REVENGE?
VRRRMM

LISTEN. I KNOW YOU DON'T KNOW ME.
WHAT?
BUT MY NAME IS BAXTER STOCKMAN. I'M THE HEAD SCIENTIST.
TRAPPED ON THIS ISLAND, JUST LIKE YOU.
HE HAS NO IDEA I WAS CHET ALLEN. I DID NOT EXPECT THIS.
I PLAN TO USE THE STORM TO CREATE AS MUCH DAMAGE AS POSSIBLE. I WANT TO HURT KRANG. I WANT TO BRING HIM TO HIS KNEES.
I SUSPECT THAT'S A MUTUAL INTEREST. AND I COULD USE YOUR HELP.
BUT HE'S OFFERING ME A WAY OUT OF THIS LAB. AND ONCE I'M OUT, I CAN SLIP AWAY. I CAN...
LEAD THE WAY, DR. STOCKMAN.

NEW QUANIN CITY SEAT OF THE PRAXOID VICEROYALTY.
—PUBLICLY EXECUTED THE MINERS WHO LED THE UPRISING, AS YOU ORDERED. BUT THE VIOLENCE CONTINUES.
BASICALLY, YOU CREATED A NEW BATCH OF MARTYRS. IF THAT WAS YOUR GOAL, THEN CONGRATULATIONS.
FINE. STOP EXECUTING THEIR LEADERS. START EXECUTING THEIR CHILDREN.
NO ARGUMENT, ZOG?
IT'S LIKE YOU ALWAYS SAY. EMPIRES ARE MESSY.
BESIDES. NOT MY PROBLEM ANYMORE.
WHAT DO YOU M—?
HRRSH

INVADERS! I WANT EVERY TRICERATON ON THIS ROCK ARMED AND OUT THERE, NOW.
LOOK AGAIN, KRANG.

JUST STAY DOWN AND WA.T FOR THE BATTLE TO PASS.
YOU'RE BETRAYING US? WE CREATED YOU!
I'M JUST DOING WHAT'S BEST FOR MY PEOPLE. IF THE UTROM EMPIRE DID THE SAME, THIS REBELLION WOULD BE OVER IN A MATTER OF DAYS.
EVERYTHING MY FATHER AND I DO IS FOR THE GOOD OF THE UTROM PEOPLE!
HA!
YOU THINK THIS IS WHAT'S BEST FOR YOUR RACE? PUTTING ALL YOUR RESOURCES INTO MILITARY MIGHT? SENDING YOUR BEST AND BRIGHTEST TO THE EDGE OF THE GA.AXY TO HOLD DOWN AN EMPIRE DOOMED TO FAIL?
QUANIN SHOULD HAVE STAYED A DIP.OMAT. OR EVEN A MIN.STER. DECLARING HIMSELF EMPEROR WAS THE BEGINN.NG OF YOUR PEOPLE'S END.
YOUR FATHER WILL NEVER STOP. THE ONLY THINGS HE CARES ABOUT ARE POWER AND GLORY. AND HE'LL DESTROY YOUR RACE TO GET THEM.

KRAK
CRASH
SAM

WE GAVE YOUR PEOPLE *LIFE!* GAVE YOU *PURPOSE!*
WHAT'S GOOD FOR THE UTROM EMPIRE *IS* GOOD FOR–
WHAM!
WHAM!
WHAM!
WHAM!
WHAM!

SNAP
RAH!
I'M LEAVING NOW. AND LEAV NG YOU ALIVE BECAUSE DEEP DOWN IN THAT TWISTED, BR LLANT BRA N OF YOURS, YOU KNOW I'M R GHT. AND THIS IS YOUR ONE CHANCE.
DO BETTER THAN YOUR FATHER. OR THE UTROM PEOPLE WILL NEVER FIND PEACE.
JUST AN ENDLESS STREAM OF NEW ENEM ES.

NORTHAMPTON, MASS.
AH, COME ON... WHERE THE HECK IS IT?
UH, DON... WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
I'M LOOKING FOR A JOURNAL. IT BELONGED TO CHET ALLEN. FUGITOID.
WHATEVER HIS NAME IS.
AFTER HE WAS KIDNAPPED BY KRANG, APRIL BROKE INTO HIS LOCKER AT STOCKGEN. SHE FOUND IT THERE.
I'VE BEEN MEANING TO LOOK THROUGH IT FOR A WHILE, BUT, YOU KNOW. SHREDDER. KARAI. LEO.
WE'VE BEEN BUSY.

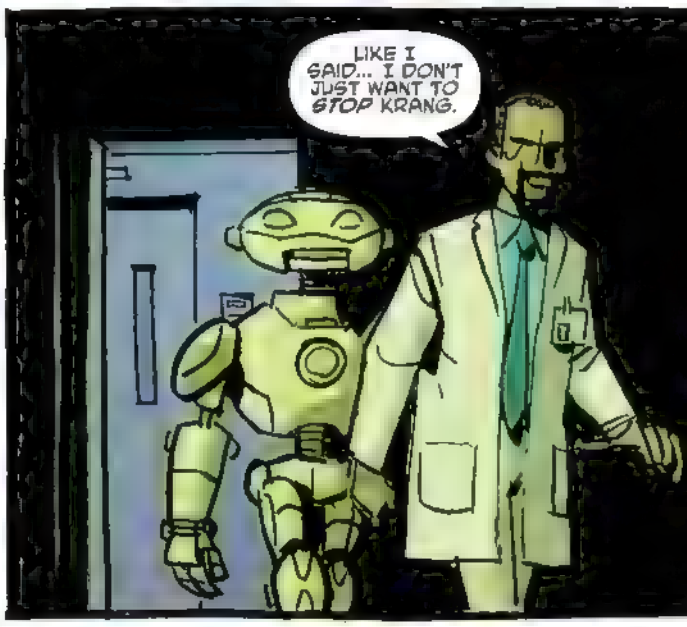
AH HA!
GEEZ, AFTER ALL THAT, IT'S PROBABLY JUST GOING TO BE GROCERY LISTS.
NOT GROCERY LISTS, MIKEY.
NOT AT ALL.

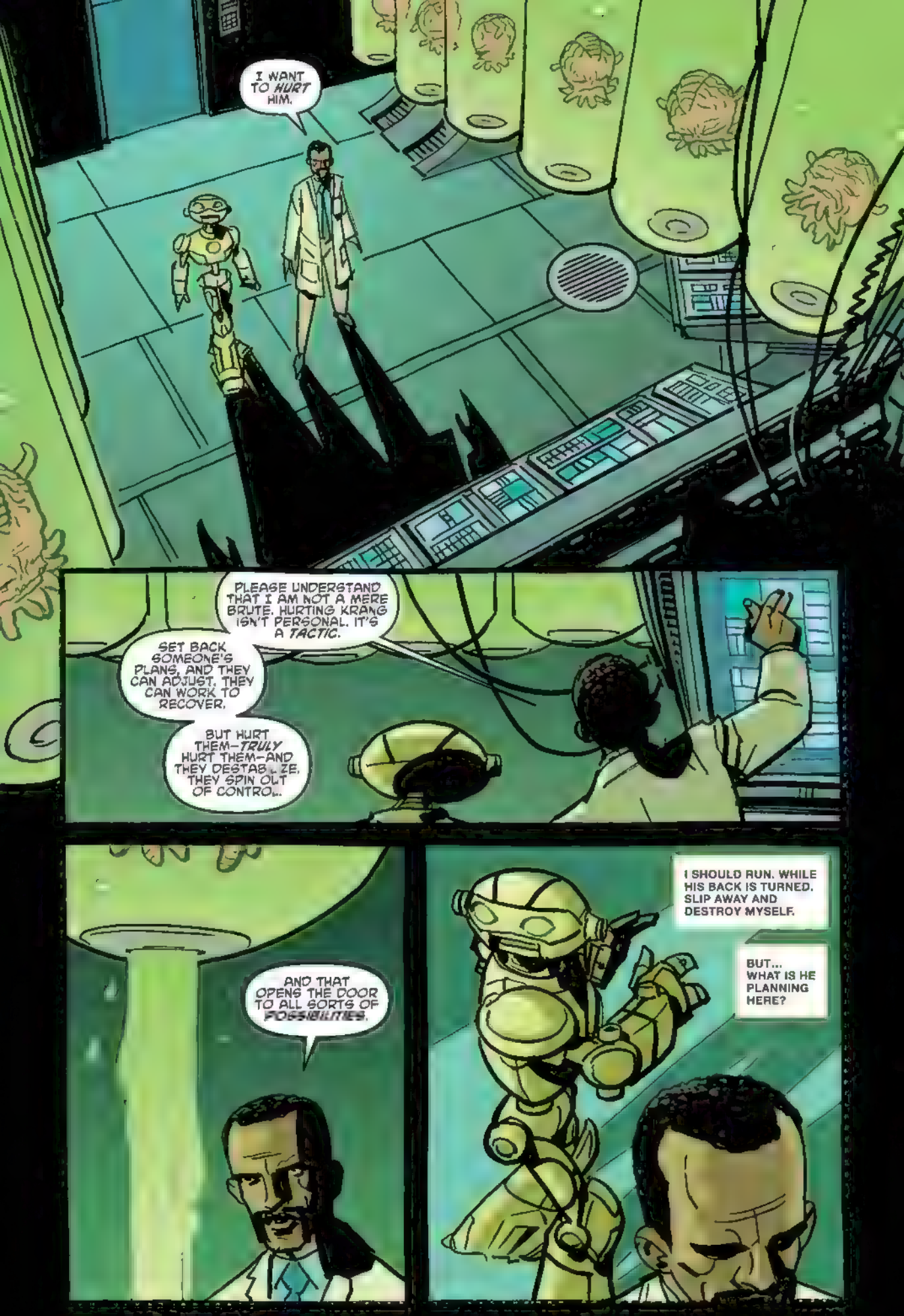
BURNOW ISLAND.
DR STOCKMAN, WE'RE GOING THE WRONG WAY.

THE TECHNODROME IS IN THE OTHER DIRECTION IF WE'RE GOING TO DESTROY IT–

DESTROY THE TECHNODROME? *DESTROY* THE MOST POWERFUL WEAPON EVER INVENTED? ARE YOU *INSANE?*
THEN... THEN WHERE ARE WE GOING?

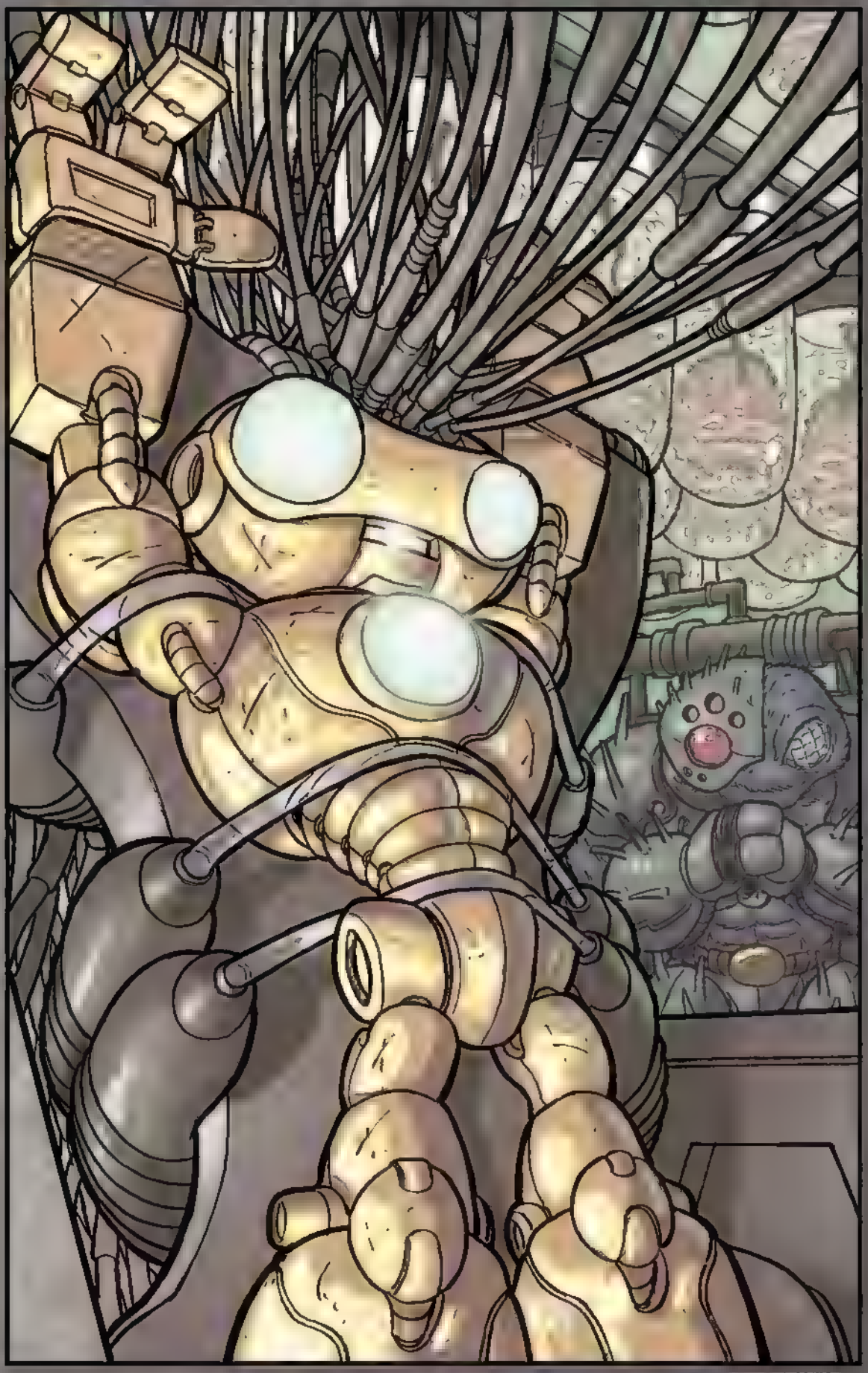
RIGHT HERE.


LIKE I SAID... I DON'T JUST WANT TO *STOP* KRANG.


I WANT TO HURT HIM.
PLEASE UNDERSTAND THAT I AM NOT A MERE BRUTE. HURTING KRANG ISN'T PERSONAL. IT'S A TACTIC.
SET BACK SOMEONE'S PLANS, AND THEY CAN ADJUST. THEY CAN WORK TO RECOVER.
BUT HURT THEM—TRULY HURT THEM—AND THEY DESTABILIZE. THEY SPIN OUT OF CONTROL.
AND THAT OPENS THE DOOR TO ALL SORTS OF POSSIBILITIES.
I SHOULD RUN. WHILE HIS BACK IS TURNED. SLIP AWAY AND DESTROY MYSELF.
BUT... WHAT IS HE PLANNING HERE?

YOU'RE [redacted] THEIR OOZE...
IT WILL KILL THEM.
YES.
IT WILL KILL THEM ALL.
THE LAST UTROMS IN EXISTENCE. ONCE THEY'RE GONE, ONLY KRANG WILL REMAIN.
TAKE AWAY EVERYTHING HE LOVES. TAKE AWAY HIS LIFE'S WORK. AND HE'LL HAVE NO MORE REASON TO EXIST.
MAYBE HE'S RIGHT. MAYBE I SHOULD RUN. DESTROY MYSELF AND LET STOCKMAN DESTROY THE UTROMS.
OR MAYBE...

THWAK
I'M SORRY, DR. STOCKMAN. YOU'RE MAKING A TERRIBLE MISTAKE.
BUT I CAN FIX IT.
I CAN FIX *EVERYTHING.*



ART BY NICK PITARRA
COLORS BY GREG and FAKE PETRE

NAH... TOO CORNY.
SKRCH SKRCH SKRCH
Yo Woody
YEAH. THAT'S MORE LIKE IT.

So, bud, I'm guessing you've been wondering where the heck I've been, huh? Well, turns out that detective work you and I did totally paid off. We finally found my bro Leo and rescued him — after a pretty gnarly fight. Then our friend April helped us escape to the country, where we're hiding out. We've been here for about a week and things have been... not so great.
The bad stuff started when a mutant named Alopex snuck on the van with us from New York. Raph got totally ticked off at her, then there was a huge brawl. First, Raph and Alopex tussled, then Leo jumped in to protect her, then Donnie and me tried to stop them, which only made Raph and Leo madder...
Total mess, dude.
My dad finally got everyone to chill... mostly. Leo and Alopex took off and they've pretty much been MIA ever since.
I'm worried about Leo. He's always been our leader, the big bro with a plan, always taking care of us.
But right now, Woody, I swear...

...he just seems so lost.
MOTHER...
We've got him back but it's like he's farther away than ever. Donnie thinks Leo was brainwashed by the Foot, and we gotta give him space. But I'm wondering if that's such a good idea.
...WHERE ARE YOU?
LET'S GO, MUTT AND DON'T MAKE A SOUND.
I think we have to take extra care of Leo right now...
MOTHER...
PLEASE...
...'cause I'm not sure he can do it for himself anymore.

A LITTLE HUNTIN' BEFORE BEDTIME, HUH, ALOPEX?
UNF!
I WASN'T HUNTING.
THEN WHAT? SEEMS LIKE EVERY TIME I SEE YOU, YOU'RE SNEAK N' AROUND.
YOU MIGHTA FOOLED THE REST OF 'EM, BUT I AIN'T FALL'N FOR YOUR LITTLE WOE-IS-ME ACT, I KNOW YOU'RE UP TO SOMETH.N'.
BELIEVE WHAT YOU WANT, TURTLE.
NO WAY!
NO WAY YOU WALK AWAY FROM ME LIKE THAT!
YOU AIN'T GOIN' NOWHERE UNTIL I FIND OUT WHAT THE HELL YOU WERE DOIN' OUT HERE.
TAKE YOUR HAND OFF ME!

WHAT WAS I DOING? I WAS TRYING TO THANK YOUR BROTHER FOR DEFENDING ME WHEN YOU AMBUSHED ME!
THANK HIM? BY HIDIN' IN THE DARK AND SPYIN' ON HIM?
YOU EXPECT ME TO BUY THAT?
NO, I DON'T. AND I COULDN'T CARE LESS IF YOU DO.
LEONARDO PROTECTED ME WHEN HE DIDN'T HAVE TO. THE LEAST I CAN DO IS SHOW SOME APPRECIATION FOR THAT, ESPECIALLY WITH WHAT HE'S GOING THROUGH.
I KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE HAVING SHREDDER IN YOUR HEAD, TWISTING EVERY THOUGHT, EVERY EMOTION.
"YOU FIGHT IT AND FIGHT IT BUT IT JUST DOESN'T STOP. IT...
"...IT NEVER STOPS."

I KNOW EXACTLY HOW LEONARDO'S FEELING. SO, I WAS MAKING SURE HE WAS ALL RIGHT--THAT HE WOULDN'T HURT HIMSELF.
NOT LIKE YOU COULD UNDERSTAND. YOU'VE STILL GOT YOUR FAMILY, FRIENDS... A HOME.
LEONARDO AND ME?
WE'VE GOT *NOTHING* NOW.
ANYWAY, BELIEVE ME OR DON'T--DOESN'T REALLY MATTER.
BUT YOU SAW LEONARDO--HOW MESSED UP HE IS. IF I WANTED TO KILL YOUR BROTHER...
...I WOULD'VE DONE IT ALREADY.
Nope, Woody.. it ain't exactly been campfire songs and marshmallows out here.

And then there's my dad.
Shredder broke his leg, it's pretty nasty.
OKAY, FATHER. I THINK THAT'LL DO IT FOR NOW. THE LACERATION'S HEALING NICELY, ALL THINGS CONSIDERED.
THE FRACTURE, THOUGH...
...WE'RE GONNA HAVE TO CLOSELY MONITOR THAT.
MM... YES.
YOU KNOW, MASTER, NOW THAT WE'VE GOT LEO BACK, I REALLY NEED TO START WORKING ON THE TECHNODROME PROBLEM.
IT'S JUST... THERE'S NOT MUCH I CAN DO ABOUT IT OUT HERE. I MEAN, I'VE GOT PROFESSOR HONEYCUTT'S JOURNAL, WHICH HELPS, BUT...
...WELL, IT JUST FEELS LIKE EVERY NEW DELAY PUTS US ONE STEP CLOSER TO THE APOCALYPSE.
WITHOUT THE PROFESSOR HERE, I CAN BARELY START TO UNDERSTAND ANY OF IT. BUT THERE'S NO DOUBT THE DESTRUCTIVE POTENTIAL AND SECURITY SAFEGUARDS ON THAT THING ARE HUGE, AND IT COULD BE REALLY FAR ALONG AND—
FATHER? ARE YOU EVEN LISTENING TO ME?
HM?
Let's just say it's the ultimate suck.
FORGET IT

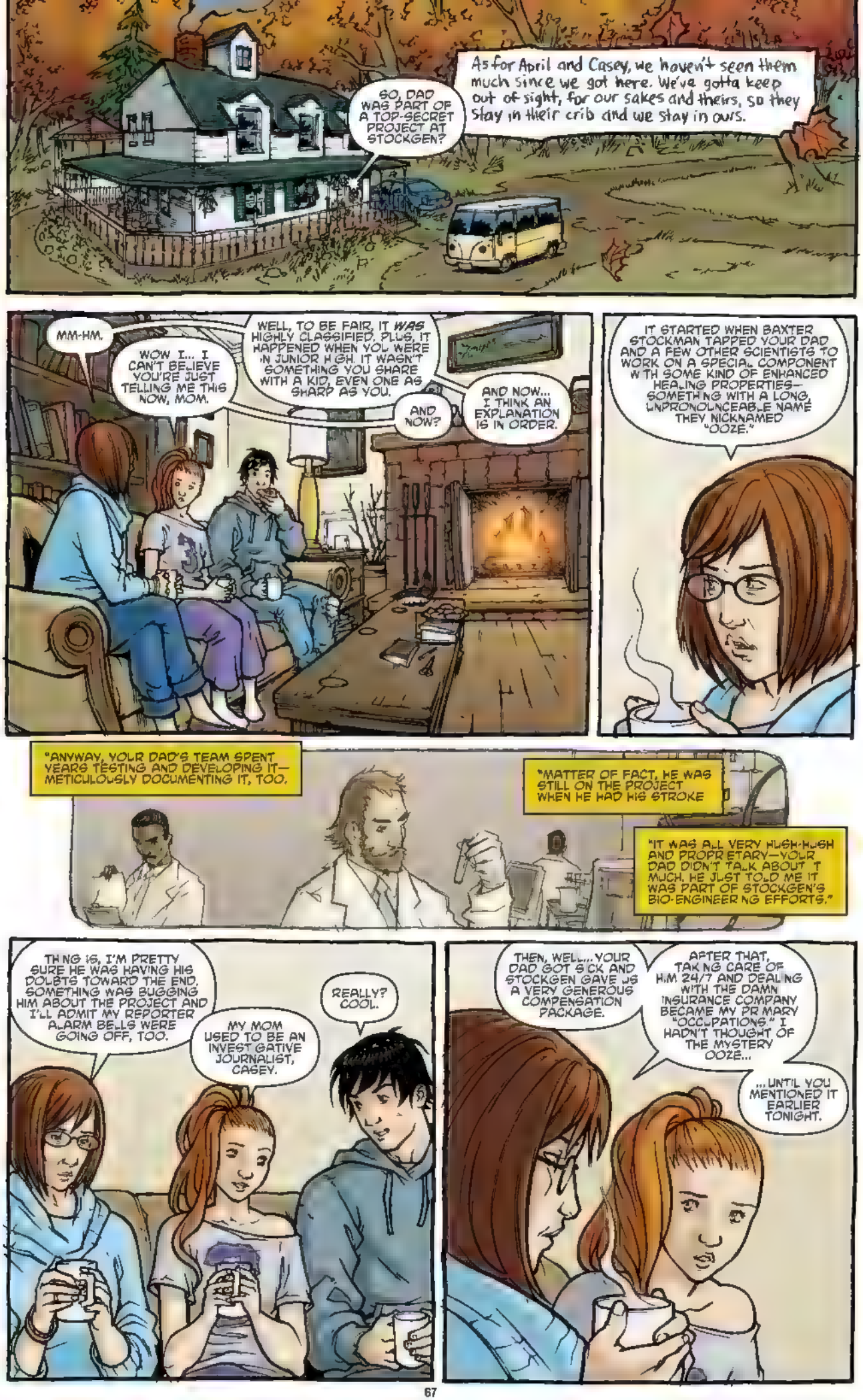
'Course, we're all feeling a little lost these days.
WHERE ARE YOU?

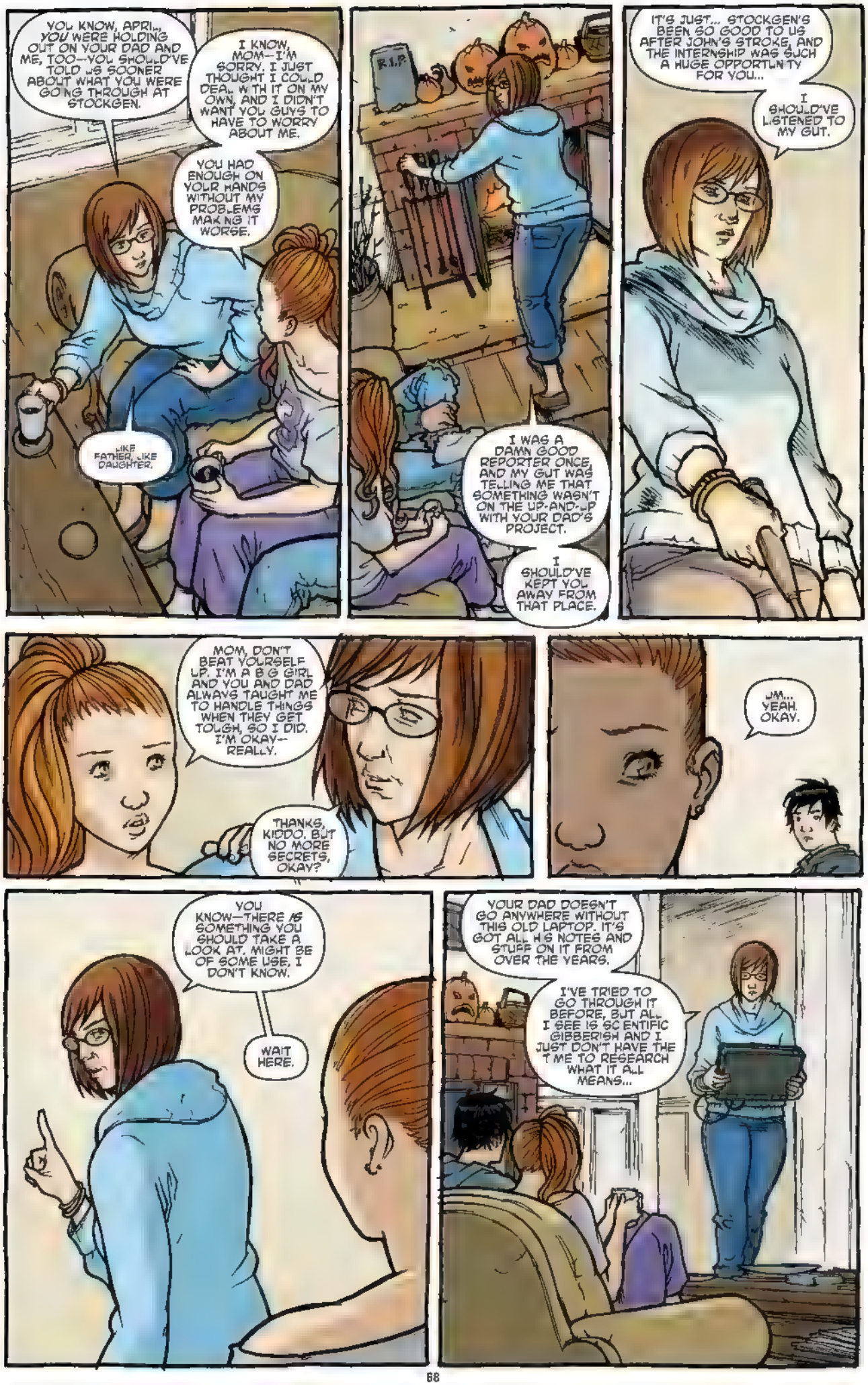
GRAAL!
NO.
NO!
NO!
RAH!
CHP
CHP

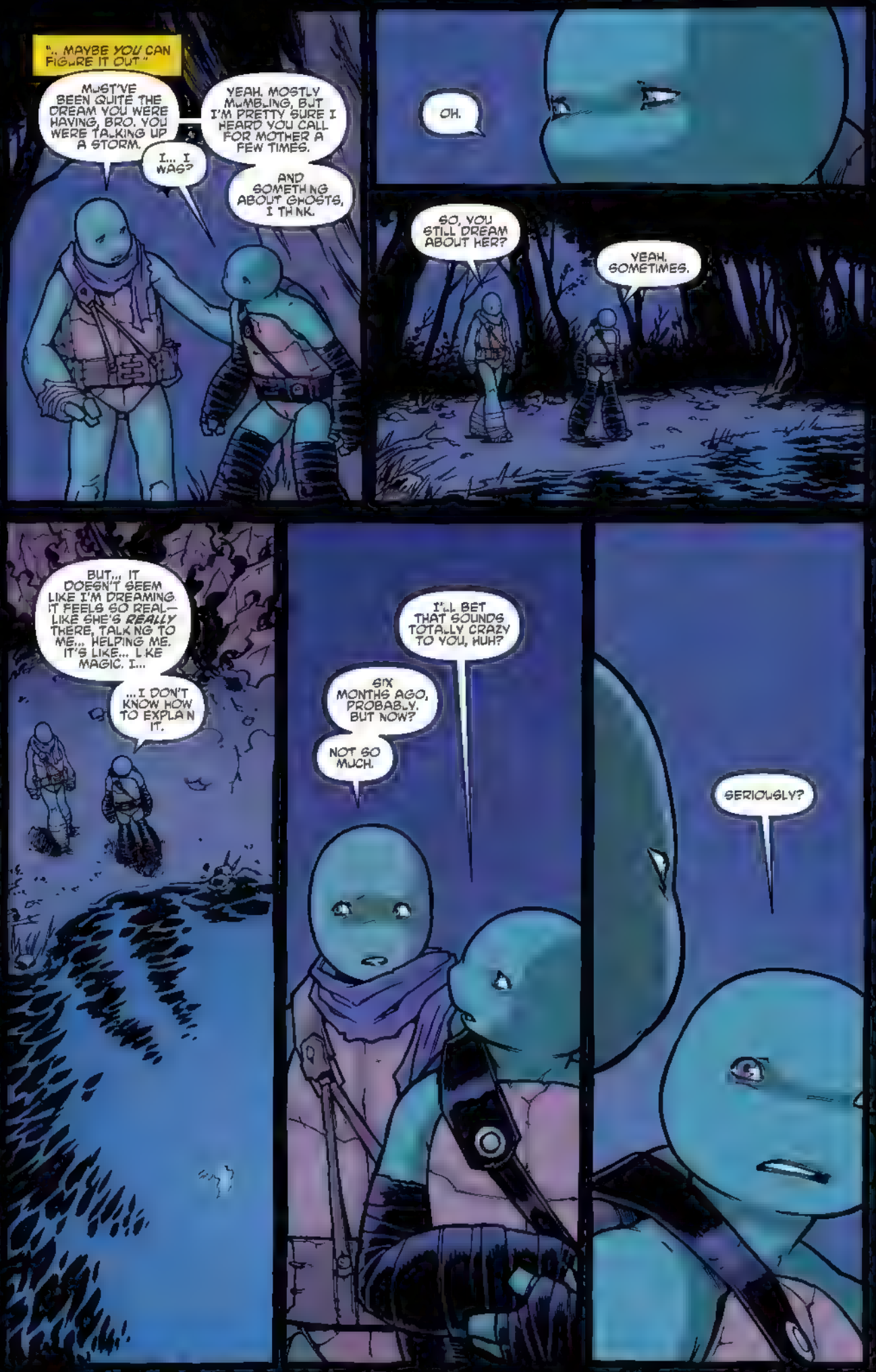
MY CHILD, CEASE YOUR STRUGGLES...
MOTHER?
...YOU HAVE *FOUND* ME.
...DO YOU NOT FEEL IT?
Y-YES.
THEN, WALK WITH ME, CHILD.
OH, THANK GOD.
WHY DO YOU WEEP, MY BEAUTIFUL SON? YOU ARE SAFE IN THIS PLACE...

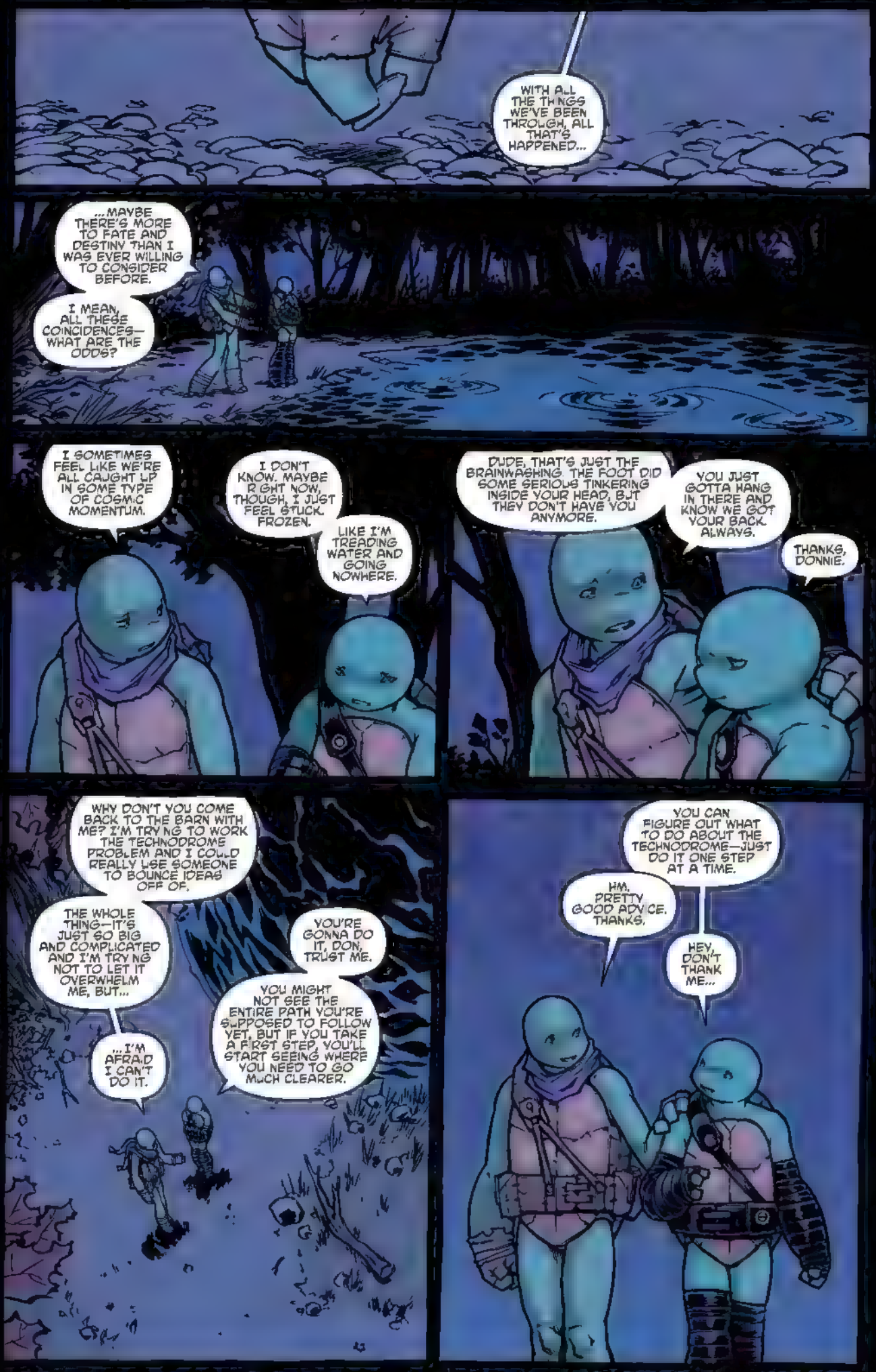
DO YOU REMEMBER THIS GARDEN, MY SON?
YES. WE'VE BEEN HERE BEFORE.
AND DO YOU RECALL WHAT I TOLD YOU WHEN LAST WE VISITED IT?
THAT WHEN I FIND WHAT I'VE LOST, I'LL KNOW WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL THE PAIN I'VE SUFFERED.
AND HAVE YOU FOUND THAT WHICH YOU HAD LOST?
I... THINK SO. I DON'T KNOW THERE ARE THOSE WHO TOOK ME... SAVED ME, BUT...
...BUT I DON'T RECOGNIZE THEM.
I MEAN, I KNOW THEY'RE MY BROTHERS, MY FATHER, BUT... THEY SEEM LIKE STRANGERS NOW. LIKE... LIKE GHOSTS.
AND YET, THEY ARE VERY REAL... AND ALL LOVE YOU DEEPLY. YOU WOULD NOT BE HERE NOW IF IT WERE NOT SO.
YOU HAVE FOUND WHAT YOU HAVE LOST, MY CHILD—YOU NEED ONLY TO PROCEED SLOWLY AND NOT ALLOW YOURSELF TO BE OVERWHELMED.
A NEW PATH LIES BEFORE YOU. YOUR ANSWERS AWAIT, IF ONLY YOU TAKE THE FIRST STEP.
LEO!
BUT... WHAT ABOUT YOU, MOTHER?
I AM NEEDED ELSEWHERE NOW..
MOTHER... WAIT.
LEO!

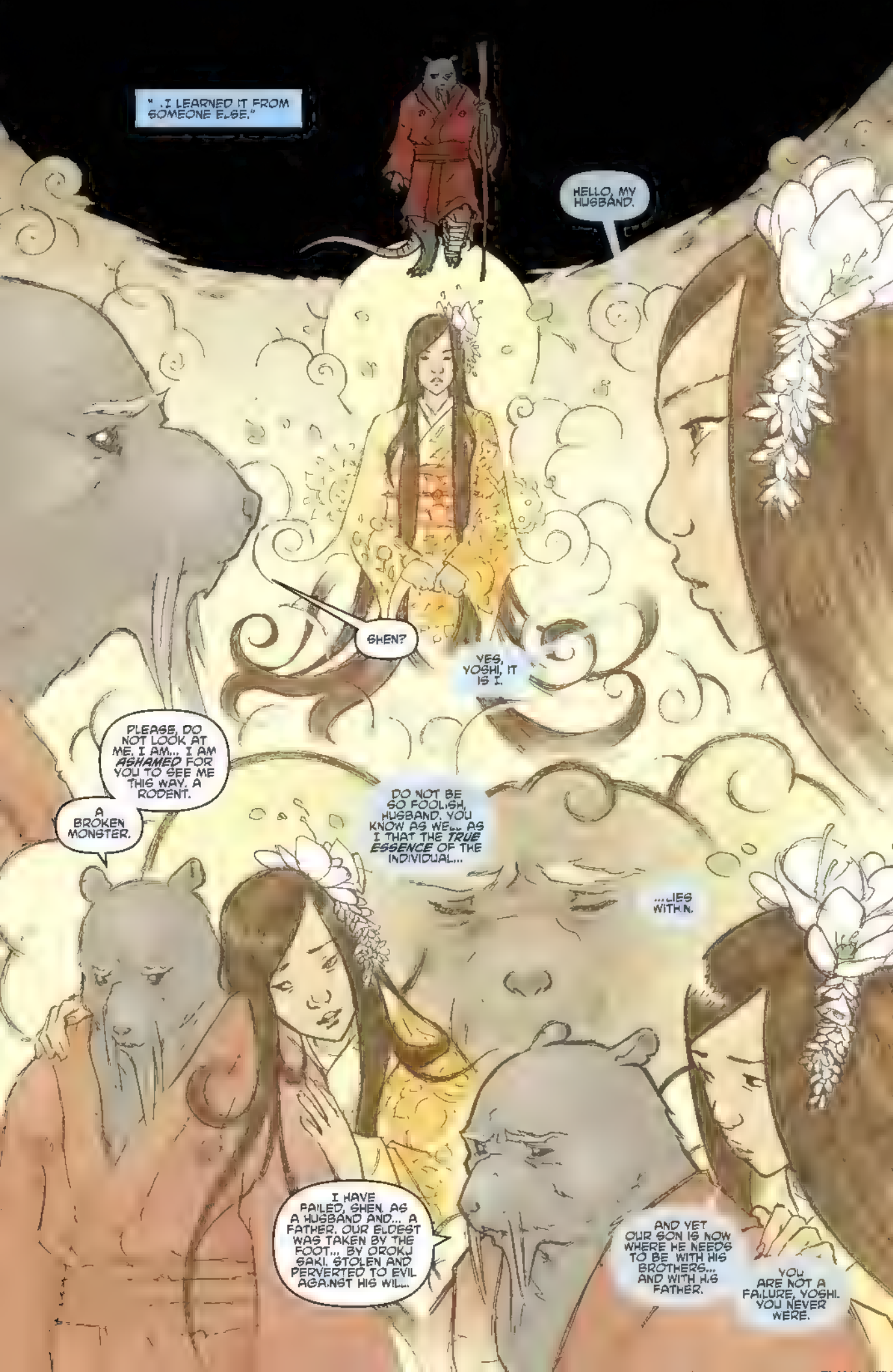
LEO!
OKAY...
...I'M COMING.
WAKE UP, LEO...
...and get things back to normal.
DONNIE?
We're just gonna have to find a way to work through this...
...WAKE UP.


SO, DAD WAS PART OF A TOP-SECRET PROJECT AT STOCKGEN?
As for April and Casey, we haven't seen them much since we got here. We've gotta keep out of sight, for our sakes and theirs, so they stay in their crib and we stay in ours.
MM-HM.
WOW I... I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU'RE JUST TELLING ME THIS NOW, MOM.
WELL, TO BE FAIR, IT *WAS* HIGHLY CLASSIFIED. PLUS, IT HAPPENED WHEN YOU WERE IN JUNIOR HIGH. IT WASN'T SOMETHING YOU SHARE WITH A KID, EVEN ONE AS SHARP AS YOU.
AND NOW?
AND NOW... I THINK AN EXPLANATION IS IN ORDER.
IT STARTED WHEN BAXTER STOCKMAN TAPPED YOUR DAD AND A FEW OTHER SCIENTISTS TO WORK ON A SPECIAL COMPONENT WITH SOME KIND OF ENHANCED HEALING PROPERTIES—SOMETHING WITH A LONG, UNPRONOUNCEABLE NAME THEY NICKNAMED "OOZE."
"ANYWAY, YOUR DAD'S TEAM SPENT YEARS TESTING AND DEVELOPING IT—METICULOUSLY DOCUMENTING IT, TOO.
"MATTER OF FACT, HE WAS STILL ON THE PROJECT WHEN HE HAD HIS STROKE
"IT WAS ALL VERY HUSH-HUSH AND PROPRIETARY—YOUR DAD DIDN'T TALK ABOUT IT MUCH. HE JUST TOLD ME IT WAS PART OF STOCKGEN'S BIO-ENGINEERING EFFORTS."
THING IS, I'M PRETTY SURE HE WAS HAVING HIS DOUBTS TOWARD THE END. SOMETHING WAS BUGGING HIM ABOUT THE PROJECT AND I'LL ADMIT MY REPORTER ALARM BELLS WERE GOING OFF, TOO.
MY MOM USED TO BE AN INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALIST, CASEY.
REALLY? COOL.
THEN, WELL... YOUR DAD GOT SICK AND STOCKGEN GAVE US A VERY GENEROUS COMPENSATION PACKAGE.
AFTER THAT, TAKING CARE OF HIM 24/7 AND DEALING WITH THE DAMN INSURANCE COMPANY BECAME MY PRIMARY "OCCUPATIONS." I HADN'T THOUGHT OF THE MYSTERY OOZE...
...UNTIL YOU MENTIONED IT EARLIER TONIGHT.


YOU KNOW, APRIL, YOU WERE HOLDING OUT ON YOUR DAD AND ME, TOO--YOU SHOULD'VE TOLD US SOONER ABOUT WHAT YOU WERE GOING THROUGH AT STOCKGEN.
I KNOW, MOM--I'M SORRY. I JUST THOUGHT I COULD DEAL WITH IT ON MY OWN, AND I DIDN'T WANT YOU GUYS TO HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT ME.
YOU HAD ENOUGH ON YOUR HANDS WITHOUT MY PROBLEMS MAKING IT WORSE.
LIKE FATHER, LIKE DAUGHTER.
R.I.P.
I WAS A DAMN GOOD REPORTER ONCE, AND MY GUT WAS TELLING ME THAT SOMETHING WASN'T ON THE UP-AND-UP WITH YOUR DAD'S PROJECT.
I SHOULD'VE KEPT YOU AWAY FROM THAT PLACE.
IT'S JUST... STOCKGEN'S BEEN SO GOOD TO US AFTER JOHN'S STROKE, AND THE INTERNSHIP WAS SUCH A HUGE OPPORTUNITY FOR YOU...
I SHOULD'VE LISTENED TO MY GUT.
MOM, DON'T BEAT YOURSELF UP. I'M A BIG GIRL AND YOU AND DAD ALWAYS TAUGHT ME TO HANDLE THINGS WHEN THEY GET TOUGH, SO I DID. I'M OKAY--REALLY.
THANKS, KIDDO. BUT NO MORE SECRETS, OKAY?
UM... YEAH. OKAY.
YOU KNOW--THERE IS SOMETHING YOU SHOULD TAKE A LOOK AT. MIGHT BE OF SOME USE, I DON'T KNOW.
WAIT HERE.
YOUR DAD DOESN'T GO ANYWHERE WITHOUT THIS OLD LAPTOP. IT'S GOT ALL HIS NOTES AND STUFF ON IT FROM OVER THE YEARS.
I'VE TRIED TO GO THROUGH IT BEFORE, BUT ALL I SEE IS SCIENTIFIC GIBBERISH AND I JUST DON'T HAVE THE TIME TO RESEARCH WHAT IT ALL MEANS...


"... MAYBE YOU CAN FIGURE IT OUT"
MUST'VE BEEN QUITE THE DREAM YOU WERE HAVING, BRO. YOU WERE TALKING UP A STORM.
I... I WAS?
YEAH. MOSTLY MUMBLING, BUT I'M PRETTY SURE I HEARD YOU CALL FOR MOTHER A FEW TIMES.
AND SOMETHING ABOUT GHOSTS, I THINK.
OH.
SO, YOU STILL DREAM ABOUT HER?
YEAH. SOMETIMES.
BUT... IT DOESN'T SEEM LIKE I'M DREAMING. IT FEELS SO REAL— LIKE SHE'S REALLY THERE, TALKING TO ME... HELPING ME. IT'S LIKE... LIKE MAGIC. I...
...I DON'T KNOW HOW TO EXPLAIN IT.
I'LL BET THAT SOUNDS TOTALLY CRAZY TO YOU, HUH?
SIX MONTHS AGO, PROBABLY. BUT NOW?
NOT SO MUCH.
SERIOUSLY?


WITH ALL THE THINGS WE'VE BEEN THROUGH, ALL THAT'S HAPPENED...
...MAYBE THERE'S MORE TO FATE AND DESTINY THAN I WAS EVER WILLING TO CONSIDER BEFORE.
I MEAN, ALL THESE COINCIDENCES—WHAT ARE THE ODDS?
I SOMETIMES FEEL LIKE WE'RE ALL CAUGHT UP IN SOME TYPE OF COSMIC MOMENTUM.
I DON'T KNOW. MAYBE RIGHT NOW, THOUGH, I JUST FEEL STUCK. FROZEN.
LIKE I'M TREADING WATER AND GOING NOWHERE.
DUDE, THAT'S JUST THE BRAINWASHING. THE FOOT DID SOME SERIOUS TINKERING INSIDE YOUR HEAD, BUT THEY DON'T HAVE YOU ANYMORE.
YOU JUST GOTTA HANG IN THERE AND KNOW WE GOT YOUR BACK. ALWAYS.
THANKS, DONNIE.
WHY DON'T YOU COME BACK TO THE BARN WITH ME? I'M TRYING TO WORK THE TECHNODROME PROBLEM AND I COULD REALLY USE SOMEONE TO BOUNCE IDEAS OFF OF.
THE WHOLE THING—IT'S JUST SO BIG AND COMPLICATED AND I'M TRYING NOT TO LET IT OVERWHELM ME, BUT...
...I'M AFRAID I CAN'T DO IT.
YOU'RE GONNA DO IT, DON. TRUST ME.
YOU MIGHT NOT SEE THE ENTIRE PATH YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO FOLLOW YET, BUT IF YOU TAKE A FIRST STEP, YOU'LL START SEEING WHERE YOU NEED TO GO MUCH CLEARER.
YOU CAN FIGURE OUT WHAT TO DO ABOUT THE TECHNODROME—JUST DO IT ONE STEP AT A TIME.
HM. PRETTY GOOD ADVICE. THANKS.
HEY, DON'T THANK ME...


". . .I LEARNED IT FROM SOMEONE ELSE."
HELLO, MY HUSBAND.
SHEN?
YES, YOSHI, IT IS I.
PLEASE, DO NOT LOOK AT ME. I AM... I AM ASHAMED FOR YOU TO SEE ME THIS WAY. A RODENT.
A BROKEN MONSTER.
DO NOT BE SO FOOLISH, HUSBAND. YOU KNOW AS WE... AS I THAT THE TRUE ESSENCE OF THE INDIVIDUAL...
...LIES WITHIN.
I HAVE FAILED, SHEN. AS A HUSBAND AND... A FATHER. OUR ELDEST WAS TAKEN BY THE FOOT... BY OROKJ SAKI. STOLEN AND PERVERTED TO EVIL AGAINST HIS WILL...
AND YET OUR SON IS NOW WHERE HE NEEDS TO BE WITH HIS BROTHERS... AND WITH HIS FATHER.
YOU ARE NOT A FAILURE, YOSHI. YOU NEVER WERE.

BUT... HE SUFFERS SO, AND THERE IS HATRED IN HIS EYES... HATRED FOR ME.
MY HUSBAND, THAT IS ONLY *CONFUSION*. OUR SON HAS BEEN UNDER A DARK AND SINISTER SPELL.
BUT YOU MUST REMEMBER, YOSHI, THERE IS ANOTHER FORCE THAT IS ALWAYS FAR STRONGER THAN THE DARKNESS.
LOVE.
FAREWELL, MY HUSBAND.
We're hurting, yeah, but we're way too strong to let this beat us.

But just in case, I'm cooking up a serious plan, bro.
A little trick of my own that I know will bring everyone back together
And I'm gonna put it in motion soon as I'm done with this letter!
It's TOTALLY gonna work, dude...
...I KNOW it!!

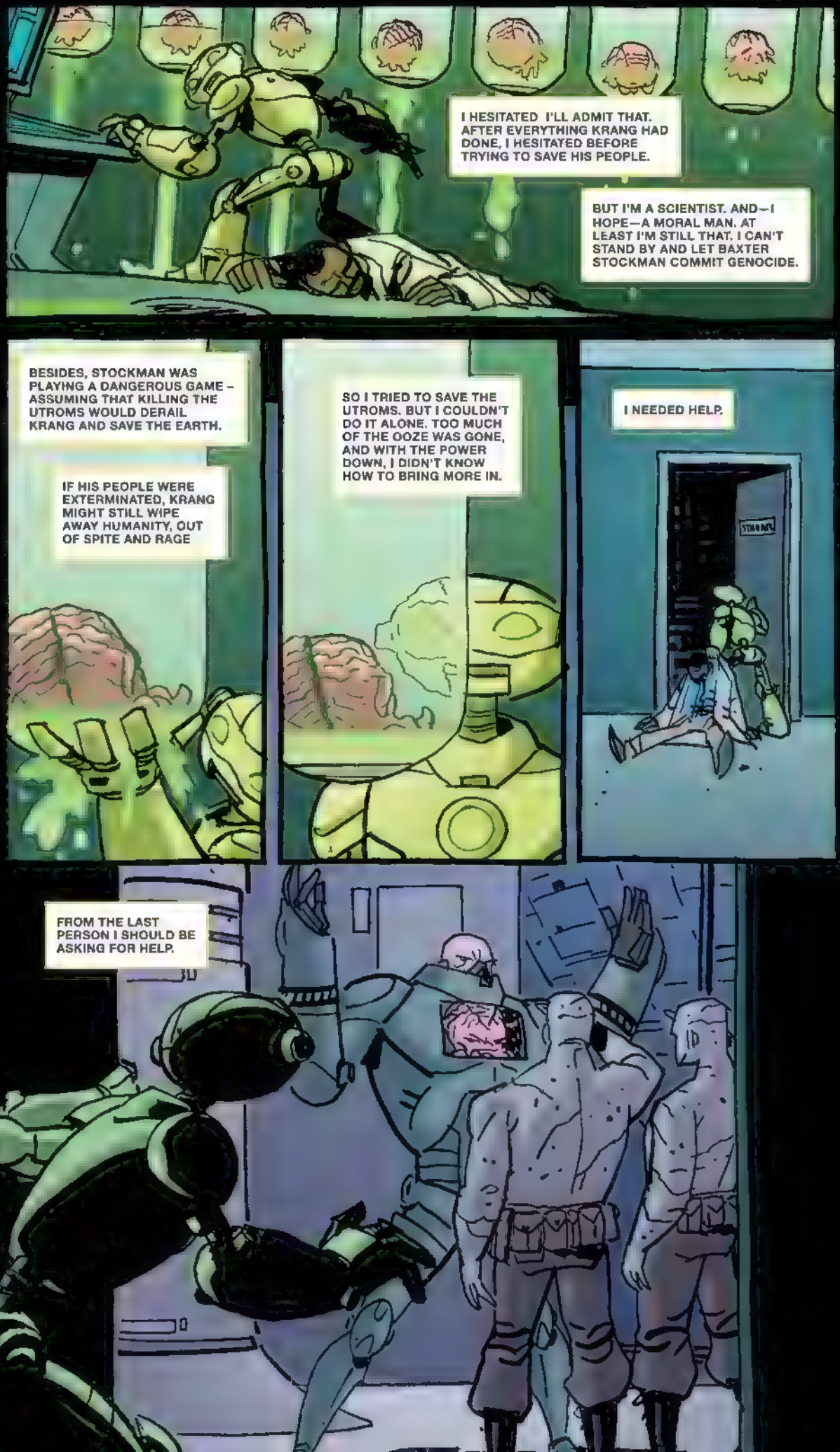
I'm gonna close this out for now, bud.
I hope everything's cool with you in NYC.
Make sure you stay out of trouble..
..just not too much.
Heh.
And don't worry about us, dude..

.. I think everything's gonna be okay.
I really do.

Your pal,
Mikester.
"THIS IS KOYA, DO YOU COPY?"
"YES. WHAT IS YOUR STATUS, KOYA?"
I HAVE FOUND THE PREY.
EXCELLENT...
...STAND BY FOR REINFORCEMENTS.
AS YOU COMMAND, KARAI.

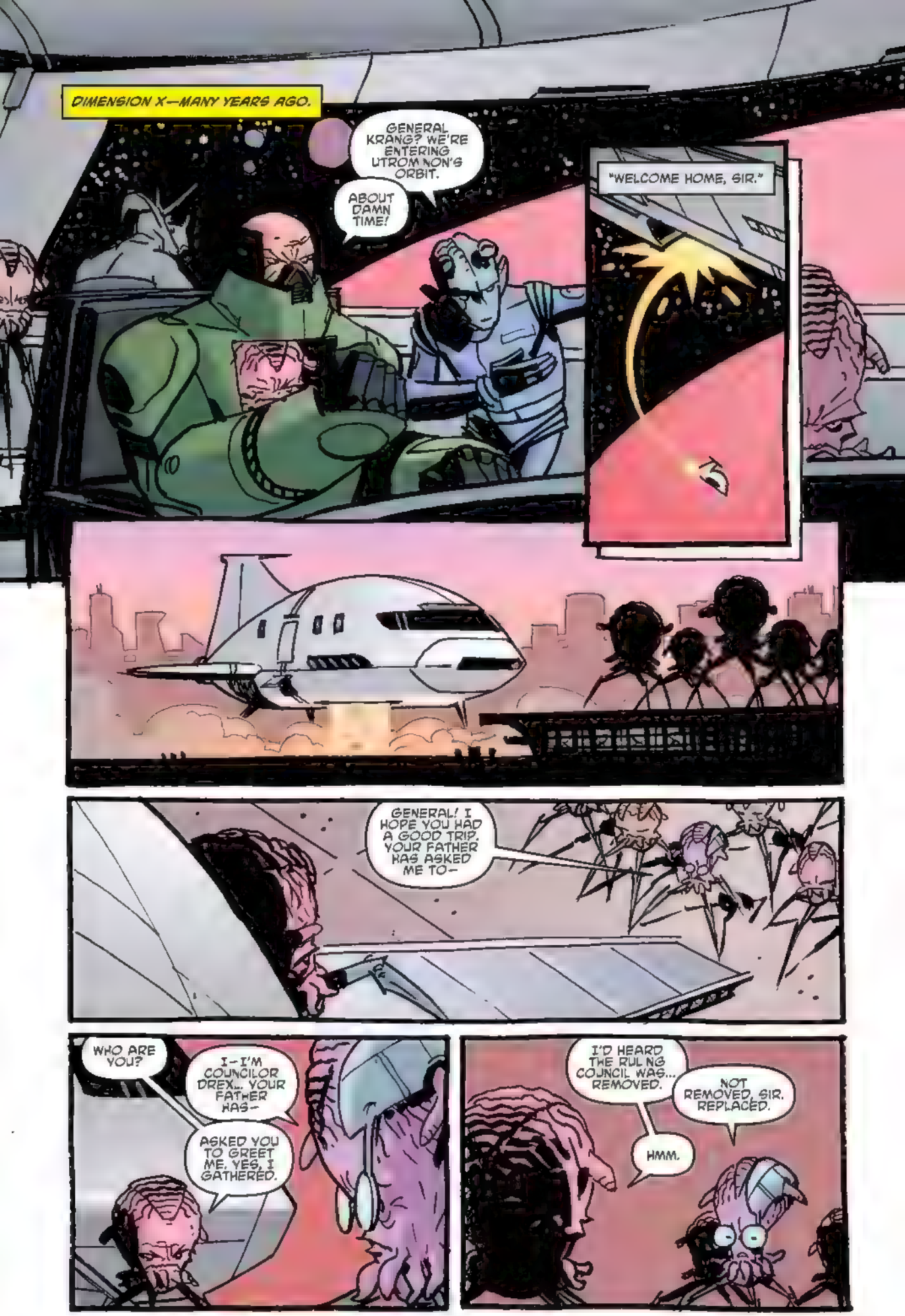
KEVIN EASTMAN
ROBIN PATTISON

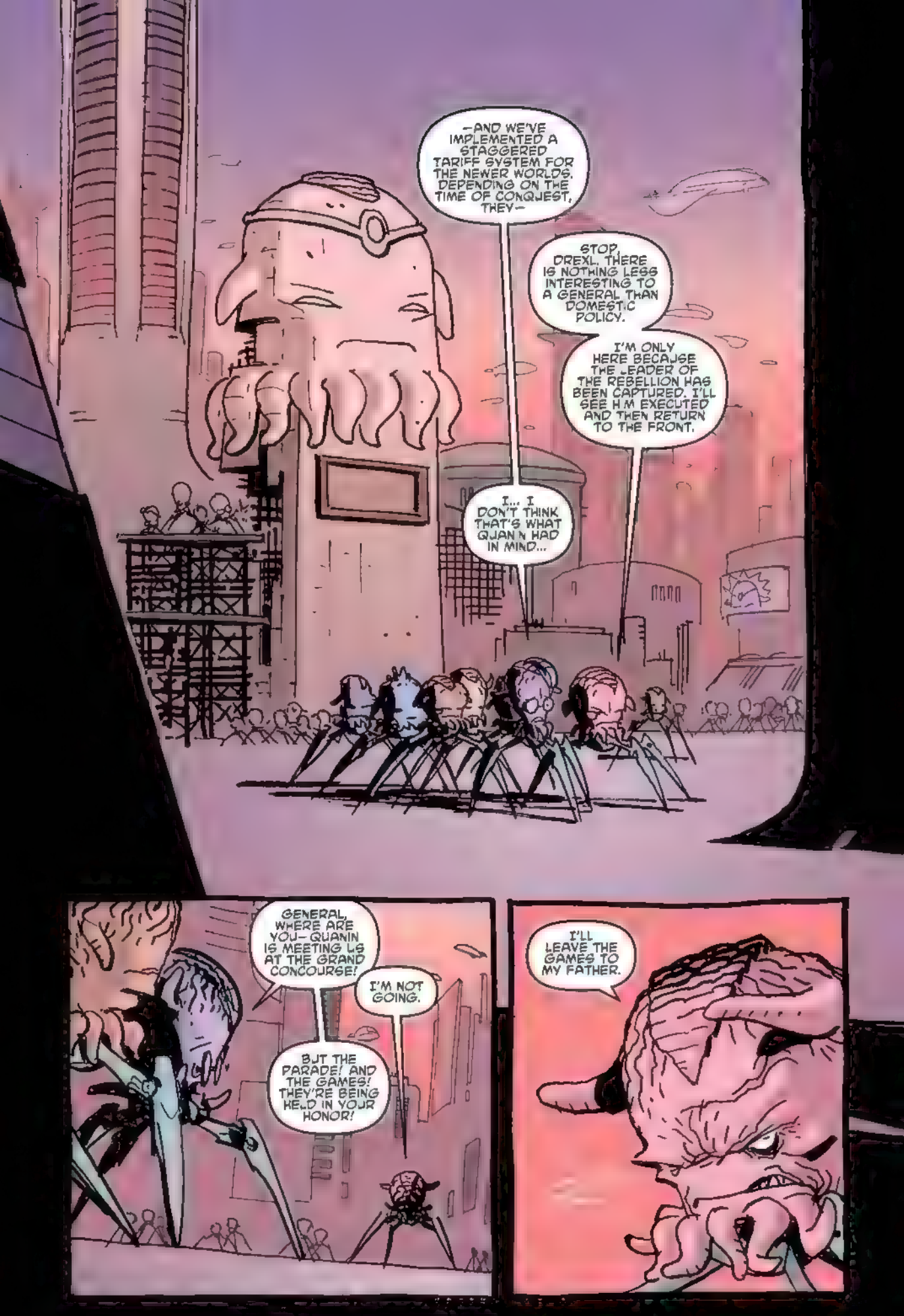
UTROM EMPIRE #2

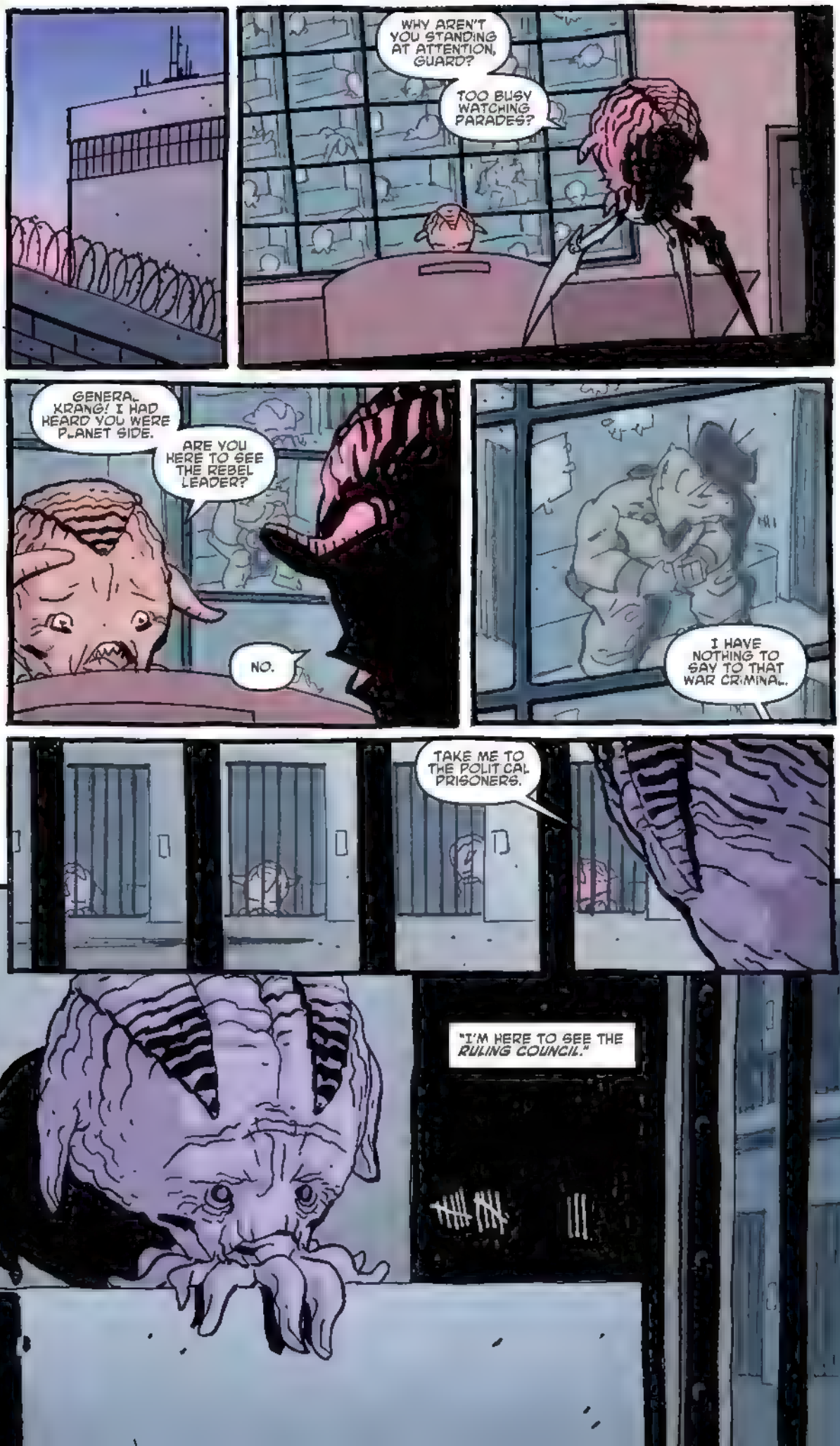

I HESITATED I'LL ADMIT THAT. AFTER EVERYTHING KRANG HAD DONE, I HESITATED BEFORE TRYING TO SAVE HIS PEOPLE.
BUT I'M A SCIENTIST. AND—I HOPE—A MORAL MAN. AT LEAST I'M STILL THAT. I CAN'T STAND BY AND LET BAXTER STOCKMAN COMMIT GENOCIDE.
BESIDES, STOCKMAN WAS PLAYING A DANGEROUS GAME – ASSUMING THAT KILLING THE UTROMS WOULD DERAIL KRANG AND SAVE THE EARTH.
IF HIS PEOPLE WERE EXTERMINATED, KRANG MIGHT STILL WIPE AWAY HUMANITY, OUT OF SPITE AND RAGE
SO I TRIED TO SAVE THE UTROMS. BUT I COULDN'T DO IT ALONE. TOO MUCH OF THE OOZE WAS GONE, AND WITH THE POWER DOWN, I DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO BRING MORE IN.
I NEEDED HELP.
FROM THE LAST PERSON I SHOULD BE ASKING FOR HELP.

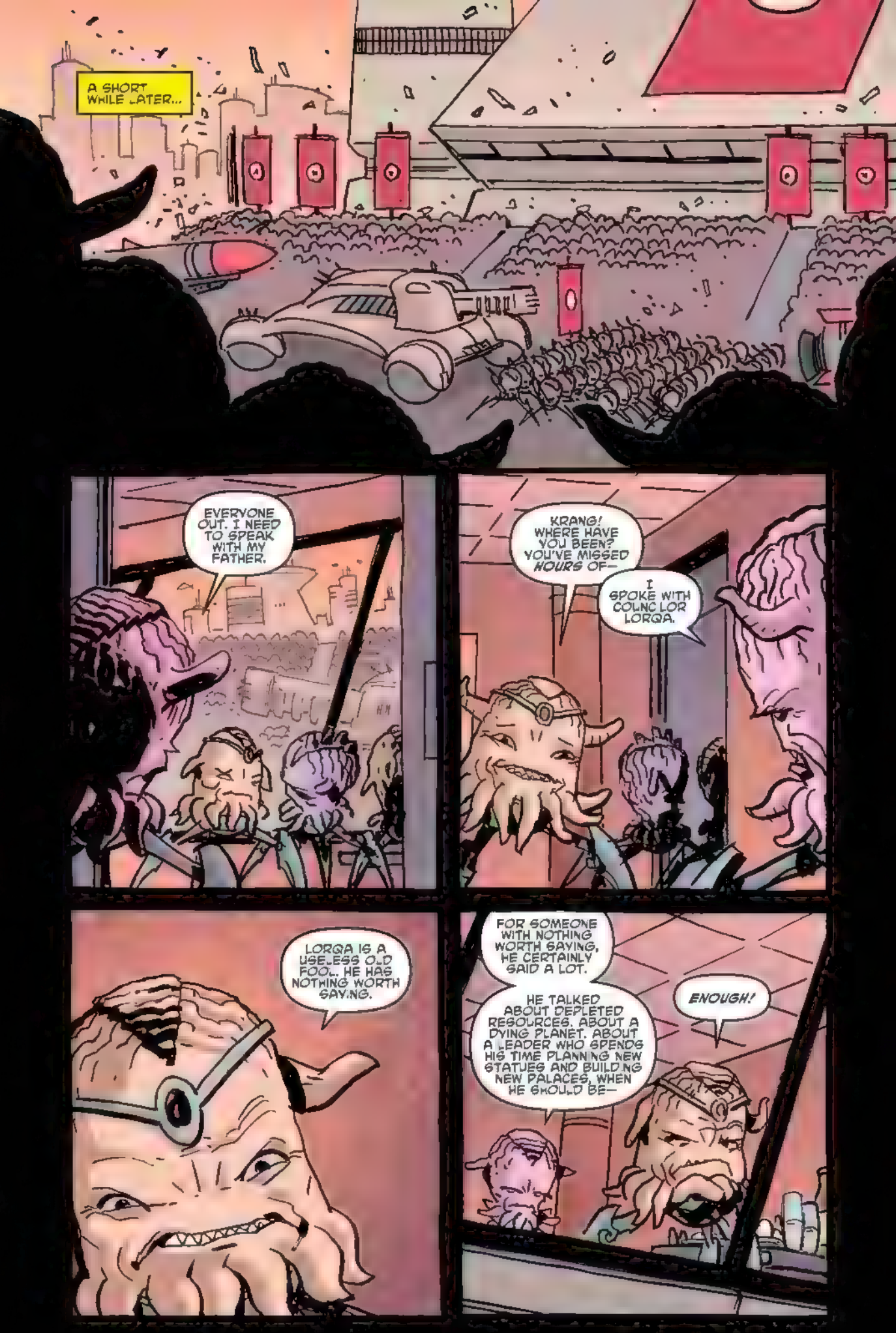
KRANG—
FUGITOID! WHAT ARE YOU—HOW DID YOU—
—STOP HIM!
KLANG
THE UTROMS ARE IN DANGER! THE ONES IN STASIS!
HELP ME, OR YOUR ENTIRE SPECIES WILL DIE.
...
LET'S GO.

LOCKED.
"NO! THIS CAN'T BE HAPPENING!"
KRSH
WHEN OOZE LEAKS OUT, THE STASIS SYSTEM SHOULD DETECT IT, AND PUMP MORE IN! BUT THE GENERATOR IS DAMAGED. IF WE DON'T REPAIR IT...
GENERAL, THE GENERATOR IS OUTSIDE AND THERE'S A HURRICANE COMING THROUGH. NO ONE COULD SURVIVE—
I CAN. AND I WILL.
IT CAN'T END LIKE THIS.


DIMENSION X—MANY YEARS AGO.
GENERAL KRANG? WE'RE ENTERING UTROM NON'S ORBIT.
ABOUT DAMN TIME!
"WELCOME HOME, SIR."
GENERAL! I HOPE YOU HAD A GOOD TRIP. YOUR FATHER HAS ASKED ME TO—
WHO ARE YOU?
I—I'M COUNCILOR DREX... YOUR FATHER HAS—
ASKED YOU TO GREET ME. YES, I GATHERED.
I'D HEARD THE RULING COUNCIL WAS... REMOVED.
NOT REMOVED, SIR. REPLACED.
HMM.


—AND WE'VE IMPLEMENTED A STAGGERED TARIFF SYSTEM FOR THE NEWER WORLDS. DEPENDING ON THE TIME OF CONQUEST, THEY—
STOP, DREXL. THERE IS NOTHING LESS INTERESTING TO A GENERAL THAN DOMESTIC POLICY.
I'M ONLY HERE BECAUSE THE LEADER OF THE REBELLION HAS BEEN CAPTURED. I'LL SEE HIM EXECUTED AND THEN RETURN TO THE FRONT.
I... I DON'T THINK THAT'S WHAT QUANN HAD IN MIND...
GENERAL, WHERE ARE YOU— QUANN IS MEETING US AT THE GRAND CONCOURSE!
I'M NOT GOING.
BUT THE PARADE! AND THE GAMES! THEY'RE BEING HELD IN YOUR HONOR!
I'LL LEAVE THE GAMES TO MY FATHER.


WHY AREN'T YOU STANDING AT ATTENTION, GUARD?
TOO BUSY WATCHING PARADES?
GENERAL KRANG! I HAD HEARD YOU WERE PLANET SIDE.
ARE YOU HERE TO SEE THE REBEL LEADER?
NO.
I HAVE NOTHING TO SAY TO THAT WAR CRIMINAL.
TAKE ME TO THE POLITICAL PRISONERS.
"I'M HERE TO SEE THE *RULING COUNCIL.*"


A SHORT WHILE LATER...
EVERYONE OUT. I NEED TO SPEAK WITH MY FATHER.
KRANG! WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN? YOU'VE MISSED HOURS OF—
I SPOKE WITH COUNCILOR LORQA.
LORQA IS A USELESS OLD FOOL. HE HAS NOTHING WORTH SAYING.
FOR SOMEONE WITH NOTHING WORTH SAYING, HE CERTAINLY SAID A LOT.
HE TALKED ABOUT DEPLETED RESOURCES, ABOUT A DYING PLANET, ABOUT A LEADER WHO SPENDS HIS TIME PLANNING NEW STATUES AND BUILDING NEW PALACES, WHEN HE SHOULD BE—
ENOUGH!

IS IT ENOUGH? BECAUSE IT SEEMS TO ME IT WILL NEVER BE ENOUGH FOR YOU.
YOU LOCK THE RULING COUNCIL AWAY, AND SURROUND YOURSELF WITH SYCOPHANTS AND—
AND YOU. YOU'RE NOT JUST HERE FOR ZOG'S EXECUTION. YOU'RE HERE BECAUSE YOU'RE THE NEWEST MEMBER OF MY RULING COUNCIL.
DON'T BE RIDICULOUS.
I BELONG ON THE FRONT LINE, FIGHTING TOOTH AND NAIL TO KEEP OUR PEOPLE SAFE, UNTIL THAT GLORIOUS DAY WHEN THIS WAR IS FINALLY OVER—
THIS WAR WILL NEVER BE OVER! OUR CONQUEST IS ETERNAL. IT SHAPES OUR LEGACY! IT GIVES US PURPOSE! AND WHEN THIS ONE ENDS, WE'LL SIMPLY FIND ANOTHER REASON TO—
DREXL! IF THIS ISN'T IMPORTANT, I WILL CUT OFF YOUR TENTACLES AND—
IT'S THE REBEL LEADER.
ZOG HAS ESCAPED!

WHAM
HALT!
ZAP!
FWOOM

EMPEROR! GENERAL! STAY BACK!
LIKE HELL.
KRPANG!
THANKS FOR BRINGING ME A R.DE.
NO!

FUGITOID! I'M HERE!
ALL RIGHT. THE WIRING IS SHOT.
WE CAN FIX THIS, KRANG. YOU JUST HAVE TO RECONNECT THE DELTA WIRES— GREEN WIRES TO RED PORTS.
BUT WHEN YOU DO, IT'LL CAUSE A MASSIVE ELECTRICAL CHARGE. IT WILL—
...FUGITOID?
IT WILL *WHAT*, FUGITOID?
IF YOU CAN HEAR ME, YOU HAD BETTER RESPOND!

WE COULD HAVE BEEN ALLIES, DR. STOCKMAN.
AND WE STILL CAN. WE CAN WORK TOGETHER WE CAN TAKE DOWN THE TECHNODROME TOGETHER.
BUT THE WAY YOU WERE GOING ABOUT IT—
"WORK TOGETHER." PLEASE.
YOU'RE NOT AN ALLY. YOU'RE A THREAT. ONE I HAD PLANNED TO BE... FORCED TO REMOVE.
A THREAT? BUT YOU—YOU ASKED FOR MY HELP. AND THEN.
OH.
AND THEN YOU WERE GOING TO FRAME ME, FOR THE GENOCIDE OF THE UTROM RACE.
TAKE ME OUT AND SAY YOU CAUGHT ME IN THE ACT
GOT IT IN ONE. AND NOW? I GUESS I'LL HAVE TO IMPROVISE.
DO IT.

I HAD ALWAYS THOUGHT OF STOCKMAN AS AMORAL.
NOT GOOD, CERTAINLY. BUT NOT EVIL, EITHER.
NOW I KNOW I WAS WRONG
SO IT'S TIME FOR A NEW APPROACH

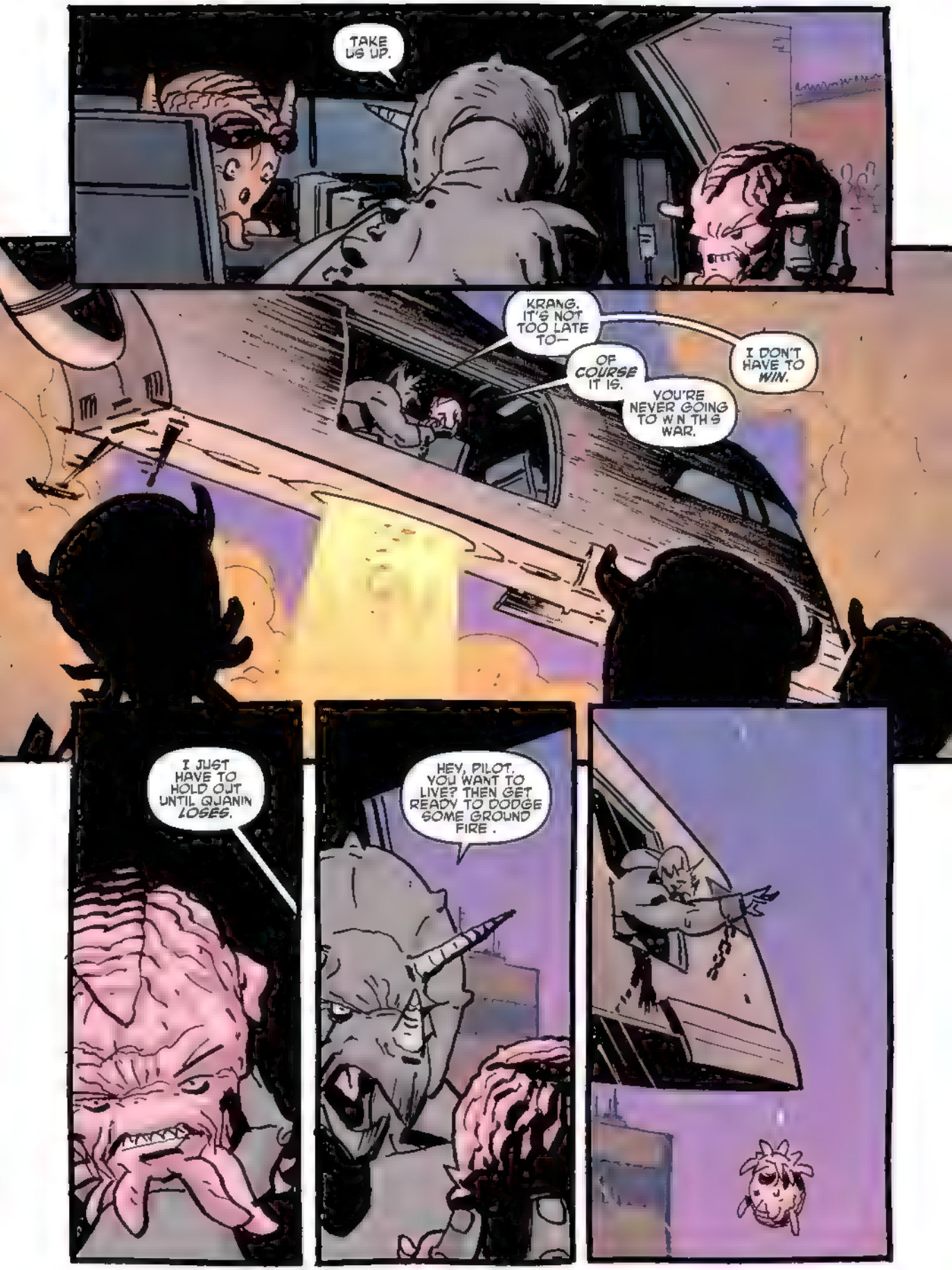
NO!
BAM!
DON'T FOLLOW ME.
AND DON'T UNDERESTIMATE ME AGAIN.

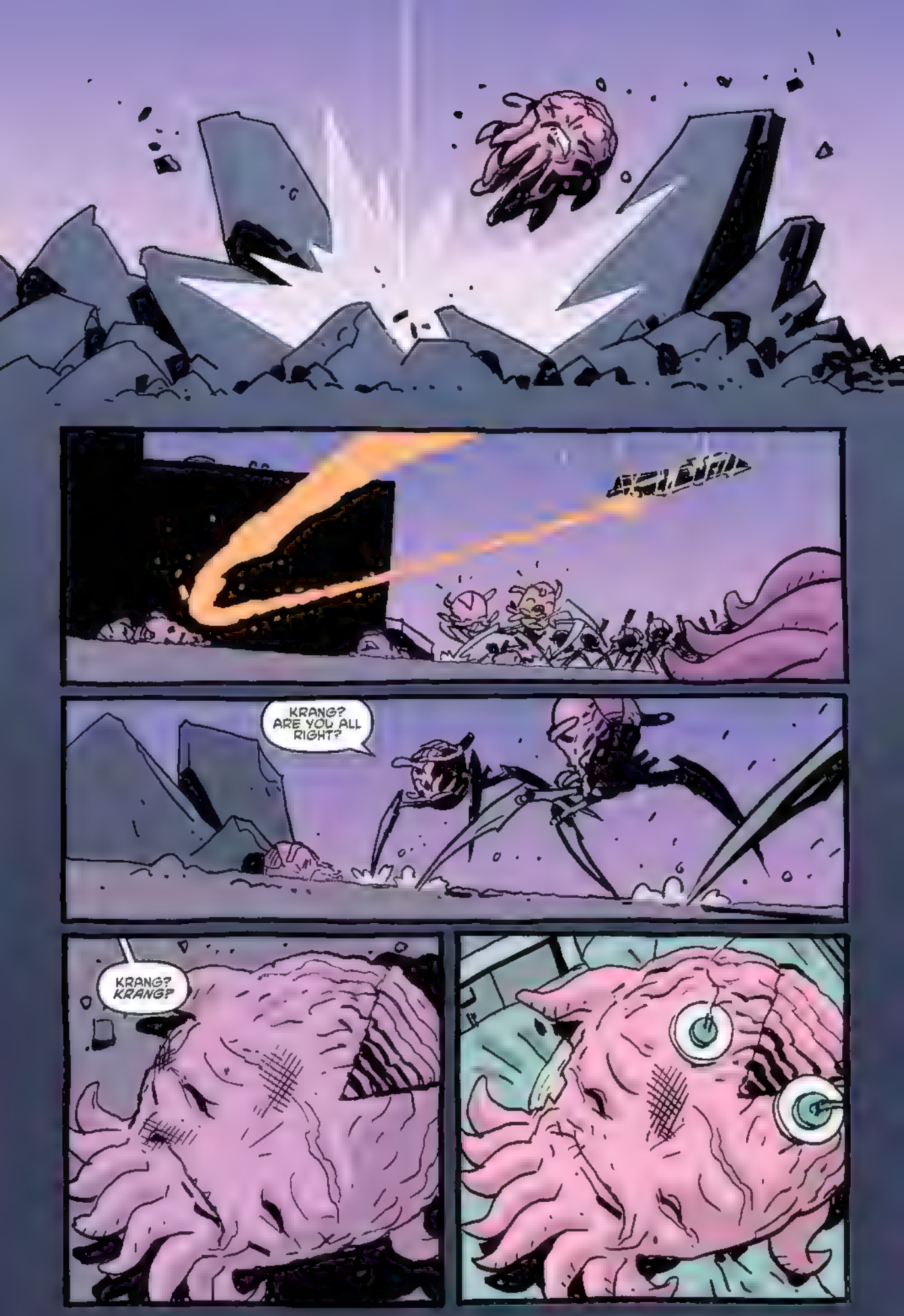
I UNDERESTIMATED THE FUG.TOID.
THAT ROBOT SCIENTIST GUY?
DONNIE IS IN LOOOOOOOOVE. HE'S READING FUGITOID'S DIARY.
HIS WORK JOURNAL.
I KNEW THAT THE FUGITOID WORKED ON THE TECHNODROME PROJECT, BUT HE DID SO MUCH MORE THAN THAT.
HE PRACTICALLY CREATED IT. IN THIS JOURNAL, HE DETAILS THE POWER-GRID- MAPS OUT THE MAJOR CIRCUIT BOARDS, EVEN EXPLAINS THE SELF-DESTRUCT SYSTEM!
SEE FOR YOURSELF!

KINDA BUSY HE-UNNNF!
THE BOTTOM LINE IS, YOU'RE SAYING THAT THIS BOOK SHOWS US HOW TO SHUT DOWN THE TECHNODROME.
AND THE TECHNODROME IS ON BURNOW ISLAND.
AND BURNOW ISLAND IS ONE OF THE MOST DANGEROUS, HEAVILY GUARDED PLACES ON EARTH.
YES!
RIGHT!
TRUE!
SO HOW DO WE *GET* TO THE TECHNODROME?
I DON'T KNOW!
ONE STEP AT A TIME, RAPH. ONE STEP AT A TIME.

DAMN IT, FUGITOID... WHERE DID YOU GO?
BZZT

JUST LOWER THE WEAPONS, AND STEP BACK. DO IT NOW.
IF YOU THINK THAT WILL HAPPEN, ZOG, YOU'RE AN EVEN BIGGER FOOL THAN I THOUGHT.
SHOOT ME NOW. DO IT.
NO! KRANG, YOU CAN'T...
JUST—JUST DO WHAT HE SAYS. PUT YOUR WEAPONS DOWN.


TAKE US UP.
KRANG. IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO—
OF COURSE IT IS.
YOU'RE NEVER GOING TO WIN THIS WAR.
I DON'T HAVE TO WIN.
I JUST HAVE TO HOLD OUT UNTIL QUANIN LOSES.
HEY, PILOT. YOU WANT TO LIVE? THEN GET READY TO DODGE SOME GROUND FIRE.


KRANG? ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
KRANG? KRANG?

I HEARD THAT ZOG ESCAPED.
SO FAR, WE FOUND THE TRANSPORT, AND THE PILOT. DEAD.
ZOG'S EXECUTION WOULD HAVE DEMORALIZED THE REBELLION. ENDED THIS WAR. ALLOWED OUR PEOPLE TO BEGIN THE HEALING PROCESS.
AND WE *HAD* HIM. WE HAD HIM, FATHER. WHY WOULD YOU LET HIM GO?
KRANG... WE'VE HAD OUR DISAGREEMENTS OVER THE YEARS. BUT YOU'RE MY *SON*. MY HEIR. THE KEY TO OUR FAMILY'S LEGACY.
NOTHING IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN THAT.
THE *UTROM RACE* IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN THAT. THE FUTURE OF OUR PEOPLE—
KRANG, HE HAD A GUN TO YOUR HEAD. WHAT WAS I SUPPOSED TO DO?
WHAT WERE YOU *SUPPOSED* TO DO?

"YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO *LET ME DIE!*"
"I WOULD SACRIFICE *ANYTHING* FOR THE UTROM RACE. WHAT'S ONE PUNY LIFE AGAINST THE FUTURE OF OUR RACE?
"THE UTROM PEOPLE MUST GO ON.
"THAT'S ALL THAT MATTERS."

[illegible] RICK PITARRA
[illegible] GREG and FUKE PETRE

art by SOPHIE CAMPBELL

ISSUE #31

I HATE TO SAY IT, BUT YOU'RE ONE-HUNDRED-PERCENT WRONG, CASEY.
NO WAY, DON—I'M CALL'N' BULLCRAP ON THAT...
...YOU JUST DON'T BRING MATH INTO SPORTS, MAN. EVER. THAT'S LIKE... LIKE BRINGIN' YOUR SISTER TO THE PROM—IT JUST AIN'T RIGHT.
FOR YOUR INFORMATION, SABERMETRICS HAS COMPLETELY CHANGED THE BUSINESS OF BASEBALL.
WHATEVER. ALL I KNOW IS I CAN SMACK A ROCKET DOWN THE LEFT FIELD LINE AND I DON'T NEED NO FANCY CALCULATIONS OR BIG WORDS TO DO IT, NEITHER.
I GUESS WE'RE JUST GONNA HAVE TO AGREE TO DISAGREE.
EVEN THOUGH I'M TOTALLY RIGHT
HEY!
JUST SAYING.
OKAY—THAT'S ALL SHE WROTE.
COOL. BY THE WAY, THANKS AGAIN FOR HELPING ME WITH THIS.
NO PROBLEM, DUDE. I USED TO DO THIS KINDA STUFF WITH MY DAD ALL THE TIME WHEN I WAS A KID.
GUY WAS PRETTY GOOD AT FIXIN' THINGS BEFORE HE GOT WAY BETTER AT BREAKIN' 'EM.
'SIDES, DON'T EVER TELL HER I SAID THIS, BUT IT BEATS GOIN' TO THE LIBRARY WITH APRIL.
I MEAN, SHE SAID IT'S FOR THE FASTER INTERNET, BUT ONCE THAT GIRL GETS AROUND BOOKS, FORGET ABOUT IT.

WELL, I'D KILL TO HAVE ACCESS TO THE INTERNET RIGHT NOW— EVEN APRIL'S PARENTS' SLOW DIAL-UP.
SPEAKIN' OF THE O'NEILS... DID APRIL TELL YOU 'BOUT HER DAD WORKIN' ON THAT OOZE STUFF AT STOCKGEN?
PRETTY CRAZY COINCIDENCE, HUH?
HEH. FATE AND DESTINY
WHAT?
NOTHING. JUST SOMETHING LEO AND I TALKED ABOUT THE OTHER DAY.
SO, WHAT DO YOU SAY WE FIRE THIS PUPPY UP?
WAY AHEAD OF YOU, BRO.
KLHNK
VRMMM VRMM
HA! FIRST TRY! MAN, I NEVER THOUGHT WE'D GET THIS OL' RUST BUCKET RUNNIN'.
LITTLE STEPS HERE AND THERE— THAT'S ALL IT TOOK.
NOT TO MENTION LOTS O' ELBOW GREASE.
I'M TELLIN' YOU, MAN...

"... T SURE IS COOL TO HAVE A NICE SURPRISE EVERY ONCE IN AWHILE."
THAT'S SOMETHING I NEVER EXPECTED TO SEE...
...I DIDN'T TAKE YOU FOR THE TAI CHI TYPE.
WHAT? NOT ENOUGH BLOOD AND GUTS FOR YOU FOOT TYPES?
FOR THE RECORD, RAPHAEL, I WAS NEVER IN THE FOOT CLAN FOR THE KILLING.
I... I JUST WANTED TO BELONG TO SOMETHING.
TO FEEL... IMPORTANT.

YOU KNOW... AFTER I WAS MUTATED, I WAS A TOTAL MESS.
I FELT LIKE A WEIRD MIX OF TWO THINGS THAT WERE NEVER MEANT TO GO TOGETHER. LIKE... LIKE...
LIKE A FREAK.
EXACTLY. A FREAK.
BUT THAT ALL CHANGED WHEN SHREDDER BROUGHT ME INTO THE FOOT CLAN.
FOR A WHILE, I REALLY THOUGHT I HAD A HOME. A PURPOSE. A FAMILY.
BUT IT WAS A LIE—ALL OF IT.
I ALREADY HAD A FAMILY, AND SHREDDER KILLED THEM. LIKE HE KILLS EVERYTHING HE DECIDES IS USELESS TO HIS BIG SCHEMES. USELESS...
...AND UNIMPORTANT.
HEY, DON'T... DON'T LET IT GET TO YOU, ALOPEX. WHO GIVES A CRAP WHAT THAT PINHEAD SHREDDER THINKS? TALK ABOUT HAVIN' ISSUES, THAT DUDE'S GOT PLENTY.
LOOK--I WAS ALONE FOR A WHILE, TOO. LOST. BUT I DIDN'T GIVE UP ON FINDIN' MY PLACE—AND EVENTUALLY, I DID. SO WILL YOU. JUST KEEP PUSHIN' FORWARD AND THINGS'LL WORK OUT.
YEAH, YOU DO HAVE A GOOD THING GOING HERE, RAPHAEL.
HEY—CALL ME RAPH.
OR... MAYBE I SHOULD CALL YOU BORING INSTEAD, HM?
TAI CHI? SERIOUSLY?

BORING, HUH?
HOW 'BOUT THIS?!
HEY!
AND THIS?!
AND...
...THIS?!
FWIP

THAT EXCITIN' ENOUGH FOR YA?
WEL....
WHA--
WHUMP
...IT'S DEFINITELY A START...
...RAPH.

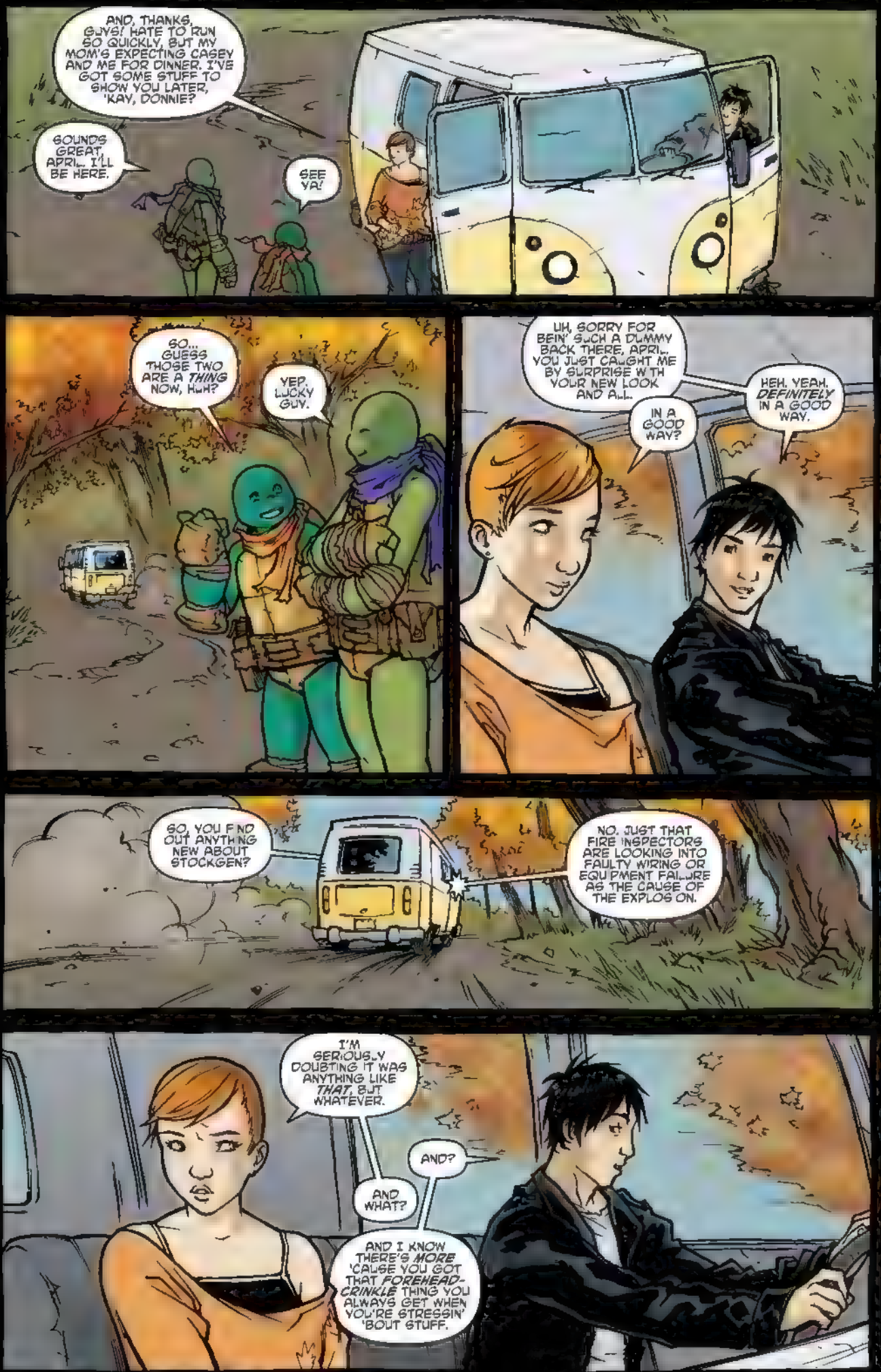
"YOU KNOW NOTHING ABOUT ME!"
"NAH, ACTUALLY, I KNOW A LOT."
RAH!
I KNOW THE ONLY THING YOU LIKE MORE THAN TRAIN'N'...
"...IS GETTIN' READY FOR TRAIN'N'."
SCHWP

MY APOLOGIES FOR INTERRUPTING YOUR TRAINING, LEONARDO...
...PLEASE DO NOT STOP ON MY ACCOUNT.
NO... NO, IT'S NOT YOU. I...
...I JUST NEEDED A BREAK. THAT'S ALL.
INDEED.
THERE ARE SOME WHO BELIEVE THAT A SWORD, ONCE DRAWN, MUST NEVER BE RETURNED TO ITS SCABBARD UNTIL IT TASTES BLOOD.
DID YOU KNOW THIS, MY SON?
I... I'VE HEARD SOMETHING LIKE IT, YEAH.
OF COURSE, IT IS MORE MYTH THAN ANY TRUE CREED— ROMANTICIZED OVER THE CENTURIES FOR SOME FANCIFUL PURPOSE, I SUPPOSE.
YET, ALL MYTHS BLOOM FROM SEEDS OF TRUTH.

IN TRUTH, A SWORD IS MERELY AN EXTENSION OF THE WARRIOR WHO WIELDS IT—A TOOL, NOT A LIVING THING.
AND A TOOL IS INCAPABLE OF BLOODLUST. THAT IS PURELY A HUMAN URGE.
WHAT... WHAT EXACTLY ARE YOU GETTING AT?
ONLY THIS: OROKU SAKI TRIED TO MAKE YOU HIS SWORD, LEONARDO...
...AND THEN DEEMED YOU A FAILURE WHEN HE WIELDED YOU AND YOU DID NOT DRAW BLOOD.
IN REALITY, YOU REVEALED THE FALLACY OF THE MYTH. A WARRIOR'S BLADE NEED NOT TASTE BLOOD FOR IT TO REMAIN VALUABLE.
YOU PROVED SAKI'S BLOODLUST WAS FULLY HIS OWN AND NEVER YOURS. IT WAS NOT YOU WHO FAILED, MY SON...
...IT WAS SHREDDER.
YEAH, WELL... I DON'T FEEL LIKE MUCH OF A SUCCESS RIGHT NOW.
I REALLY DON'T FEEL MUCH OF ANYTHING.
I UNDERSTAND.
DO YOU?

THERE WAS A TIME, MY SON, WHEN I FELT I HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO GIVE UP ON ALL THAT MATTERED TO ME AND SUCCUMB TO MY PAIN.
PLEASE, JUST LET ME G—
BUT YOUR MOTHER, TANG SHEN, WOULD NOT ALLOW IT.
SHE WAS PREGNANT WITH YOU THEN—OUR FIRST CHILD. AND SHE REFUSED TO PERMIT ME TO TURN MY BACK ON MY FAMILY.
INSTEAD, THROUGH HER LOVE, SHE HELPED ME TO FIND STRENGTH AND PURPOSE WHEN I THOUGHT I HAD NONE LEFT TO OFFER.
SHE WAS ALWAYS AN UNCANNILY WISE AND CONVINCING PERSON, YOUR MOTHER...
...SHE STILL IS.
HOW—
I KNOW THAT YOU FEEL CONFUSED, MY SON—ADRIFT STILL IN THE DARK CURRENTS OF SHREDDER'S DEVIOUS PLOT
BUT OUT OF ETERNAL RESPECT AND LOVE FOR YOUR MOTHER, I WILL NOT ALLOW YOU TO GIVE UP ON YOUR LIFE... OR YOUR FAMILY.
NOW, MORE THAN EVER, WE MUST ALL COME TOGETHER AS ONE.

DUDES, YOU TOTALLY FIXED IT!
OH, MAN, I CAN'T WAIT TO TAKE IT FOR A SPIN!
WELL, YOU'RE GONNA HAVE A LONG WAIT, BRO. RACING IT ALL OVER THE FARM'LL BLOW OUR COVER FASTER THAN YOU CAN SAY "DIRTY CARBURETOR."
HONK HONK
YO, THERE'S APRIL. GOTTA JET, FELLAS.
YOU KNOW, MAYBE APRIL'S DAD'S GOT AN OLD TRACTOR AROUND HERE WE CAN WORK ON NEX—WHOA.
WOW.
TOTALLY.
I, UM... STOPPED BY THE SALON ON THE WAY HOME.
YOU LIKE?
YOU LOOK TOTALLY RAD!
YEAH, APRIL, THAT'S A REALLY NICE STYLE ON YOU.
WHOA.
I'LL TAKE THAT AS A "YES," CASEY.


AND, THANKS, GUYS! HATE TO RUN SO QUICKLY, BUT MY MOM'S EXPECTING CASEY AND ME FOR DINNER. I'VE GOT SOME STUFF TO SHOW YOU LATER, 'KAY, DONNIE?
SOUNDS GREAT, APRIL. I'LL BE HERE.
SEE YA!
SO... GUESS THOSE TWO ARE A *THING* NOW, HUH?
YEP. LUCKY GUY.
UH, SORRY FOR BEIN' SUCH A DUMMY BACK THERE, APRIL. YOU JUST CAUGHT ME BY SURPRISE W TH YOUR NEW LOOK AND A..L.
IN A GOOD WAY?
HEH. YEAH. *DEFINITELY* IN A GOOD WAY.
SO, YOU F ND OUT ANYTH NG NEW ABOUT STOCKGEN?
NO. JUST THAT FIRE INSPECTORS ARE LOOKING INTO FAULTY WIRING OR EQU PMENT FAIL URE AS THE CAUSE OF THE EXPLOS ON.
I'M SERIOUSLY DOUBTING IT WAS ANYTHING LIKE *THAT*, BUT WHATEVER.
AND?
AND WHAT?
AND I KNOW THERE'S *MORE* 'CAUSE YOU GOT THAT *FOREHEAD-CRINKLE* THING YOU ALWAYS GET WHEN YOU'RE STRESSIN' 'BOUT STUFF.

I DO NOT GET A CRINKLE THING IN MY FOREHEAD, CASEY JONES.
YEAH, YOU DO. YOU USUALLY FIDGET WITH YOUR PONYTAIL, TOO—NOT THAT YA CAN NOW.
SO...
...WHAT'S UP?
WHAT'S UP IS THIS.
WHOA—THAT OOZE FROM STOCKGEN?
YOU BROUGHT IT WITH YOU?
YEAH, I WAS HOPING TO STUDY IT WHILE WE'RE HERE—I JUST DIDN'T EXPECT TO UNDERSTAND IT SO QUICKLY.
I GOT A CHANCE TO REALLY DIG INTO MY DAD'S OLD STOCKGEN NOTES TODAY, AND THE STUFF HE WAS DOING BACK THEN, CASEY... IT'S TOTALLY AMAZING.
THEY WERE ONTO SOMETHING BIG WITH THIS OOZE. REALLY, REALLY BIG.
IF I UNDERSTAND HIS FINDINGS, THE HEALING FACTOR OF THIS COMPONENT IS VIRTUALLY INCALCULABLE. EVEN THIS LITTLE BIT I SNATCHED IS MEGA-POWERFUL.
BUT NOW THAT I KNOW MORE ABOUT IT, I'M...
...HONESTLY, I'M MORE CONFUSED THAN EVER.
THIS OOZE IS LIKE A HEALING POTION. WE COULD USE IT TO FIX YOUR STAB WOUND OR MEND SPLINTER'S LEG OR... OR, WHO KNOWS WHAT?
BUT WE'VE ONLY GOT ENOUGH TO CURE ONE THING AND... I JUST DON'T KNOW HOW TO MAKE A DECISION LIKE THAT.
I MEAN, HOW DO YOU CHOOSE?

WHY ARE YOU STOPPING?
'CAUSE I WANNA SAY SOMETHIN' THAT NEEDS SAYIN'
LOOK, YOU'RE BEIN' LIKE DONNIE WITH BASEBALL RIGHT NOW--OVER-THINKIN' THINGS THAT AIN'T REALLY COMPLICATED.
ME AND THAT OLD RAT... WE'RE BRAWLERS. WE'RE USED TO HEAL N' LP OUR BOO-BOOS WITHOUT THE HELP OF ANY GREEN GLOP. I KNOW HE'D TELL YOU THE SAME.
YOU... YOU'RE SURE?
SURE I'M SURE. 'SIDES, WE ALREADY GOT DOCTOR DONNIE TAKIN' GOOD CARE OF US.
BUT THERE IS SOMEONE WHO COULD REALLY USE SOME MAGIC HEALIN', AND I KNOW YOU ALREADY THOUGHT THE SAME THING, TOO, EVEN IF YOU AIN'T SAYIN' IT.
MY DAD.
YEAH... HE NEEDS IT WAY WORSE THAN ANY OF US.
BUT, YOU SURE IT'S SAFE, APRIL? I MEAN, WHAT IF HE GETS CHANGED INTO A BIG LIZARD OR SOMETHIN'?
NO, THAT WON'T HAPPEN. I CROSS-REFERENCED MY DAD'S NOTES AGAINST THE LABEL CODES ON THIS, AND I'M POSITIVE THIS CONTAINS THE HEALING COMPOUND ONLY. NO MUTAGEN.
SO, YEAH, I'M CONFIDENT IT'LL WORK— IT'LL MAKE MY DAD BETTER.
WHICH BEGS THE QUESTION— HOW DO I GIVE THIS TO MY DAD? IF I TELL HIM WHAT IT IS, HE AND MY MOM ARE GONNA HAVE TONS OF QUESTIONS. I CAN'T ANSWER HONESTLY RIGHT NOW.
I SWEAR, ALL THESE SECRETS WE'RE KEEPING—IT JUST SEEMS LIKE IT'S NEVER GONNA END, AND I HATE IT.
THERE'S NOTHING I WANT MORE RIGHT NOW THAN TO BE STRAIGHT WITH MY PARENTS, BUT THE TURTLES? SPLINTER? THEY'RE NOT MY SECRETS TO TELL.
APRIL... WHATEVER YOU DECIDE, I'M WITH YA, BUT, HONESTLY, THAT STUFF'S WAY OUTTA MY LEAGUE.
I ALREADY TOLD YOU, US FIGHTERS ARE GOOD AT HITTIN' THINGS AND GETTIN' HIT...

"...WE LEAVE THE COMPLICATED STUFF FOR YOU BIG BRAINS TO FIGURE OUT."
SO, HOLD ON A SEC— IS IT *GOOD* OR *BAD* THAT STOCKGEN'S GONE?
HARD TO SAY, MIKEY. FOR SURE IT SUCKS THAT WE'VE LOST AN IMPORTANT LINK TO OUR PAST. BUT THE STUFF THEY WERE DOING THERE WAS PRETTY SKETCHY.
THE TRUTH IS, THE TECHNODROME'S GOT TO BE OUR MAIN CONCERN NOW ANYWAY.
I MUST MAKE A CONFESSION, MY SONS. JUST PRIOR TO OUR ASSAULT AGAINST OROKU SAKI, I COVERTLY INFILTRATED STOCKGEN.
WHAT? WHY?
OLD HOB DESIRED MUTAGEN, AND I WAS ABLE TO ACQUIRE IT FOR HIM.
OH, MAN—THAT FLEABITER'S GOT MUTAGEN NOW? ALL DUE RESPECT, SENSEI, BUT *WHAT THE HELL* WERE YOU THINKIN'?
I WAS THINKING OF YOUR BROTHER, RAPHAEL... NOTHING MORE.
I NEEDED OLD HOB'S ASSISTANCE IN THE BATTLE TO SAVE LEONARDO, AND THAT OUTWEIGHED MY CONCERNS REGARDING HIS TRUE INTENTIONS.
TRUE INTENTIONS?! THAT PSYCHO WANTS TO BUILD HIMSELF A *MUTANT ARMY!* HE SURE BLABBED ABOUT IT ENOUGH.
YES, AND AFTER I LEFT STOCKGEN, OLD HOB AND SLASH REMAINED BEHIND. NOW I WONDER...
WONDER NOTHIN'! THAT WALKIN' THROW-RUG *HADDA* BE A PART OF IT!
DUDE!
HEY... THE GOOD THING IS ALL THAT'S FAR AWAY. WE'VE STILL GOT BIG THINGS TO WORRY ABOUT, TRUE, BUT FOR NOW AT LEAST WE CAN DO IT IN PEACE AND QUIET.

MASSACRE THEM.

WHAT THE HELL?!
WHO'S THE CRAZY BIRD?
AND HOW'D THEY FIND US HERE?
RAAGH!
NO...
...I THINK NOT.
UFF!
WAITAMINUTE...
I KNEW IT!

WHAT THE—WHO ARE THESE CLOWNS?!
FOOT ASSASSINS!
ASSASSINS?!
YES...
...KILLERS OF THE HIGHEST ORDER!
IT WAS YOU!
WAIT... NO—
YOU'RE STILL WITH THEM!
UFF!
DUDE, WHERE'S THE B.R—

LOOK OUT!
SKREEE!
MIKE, YOU OKAY?
YEAH...
...BUT I SURE MISS THE PEACE AND QUIET.

FOCUS NOW. REMEMBER YOUR TRAINING...
...AND DEFEND YOUR FAMILY!
TOK
SHHK
MAN, THESE GUYS ARE FAST!
GRF!
WHUP
TOO FAST!
KRK!
SHUK

KRK
HYAH!
HRRF!
YOU ARE BEATEN, RODENT.
UNH!
THERE IS NO ESCAPE.
ARE YOU PREPARED FOR THE SLAUGHTER?
THAT'S FUNNY, BIRD...

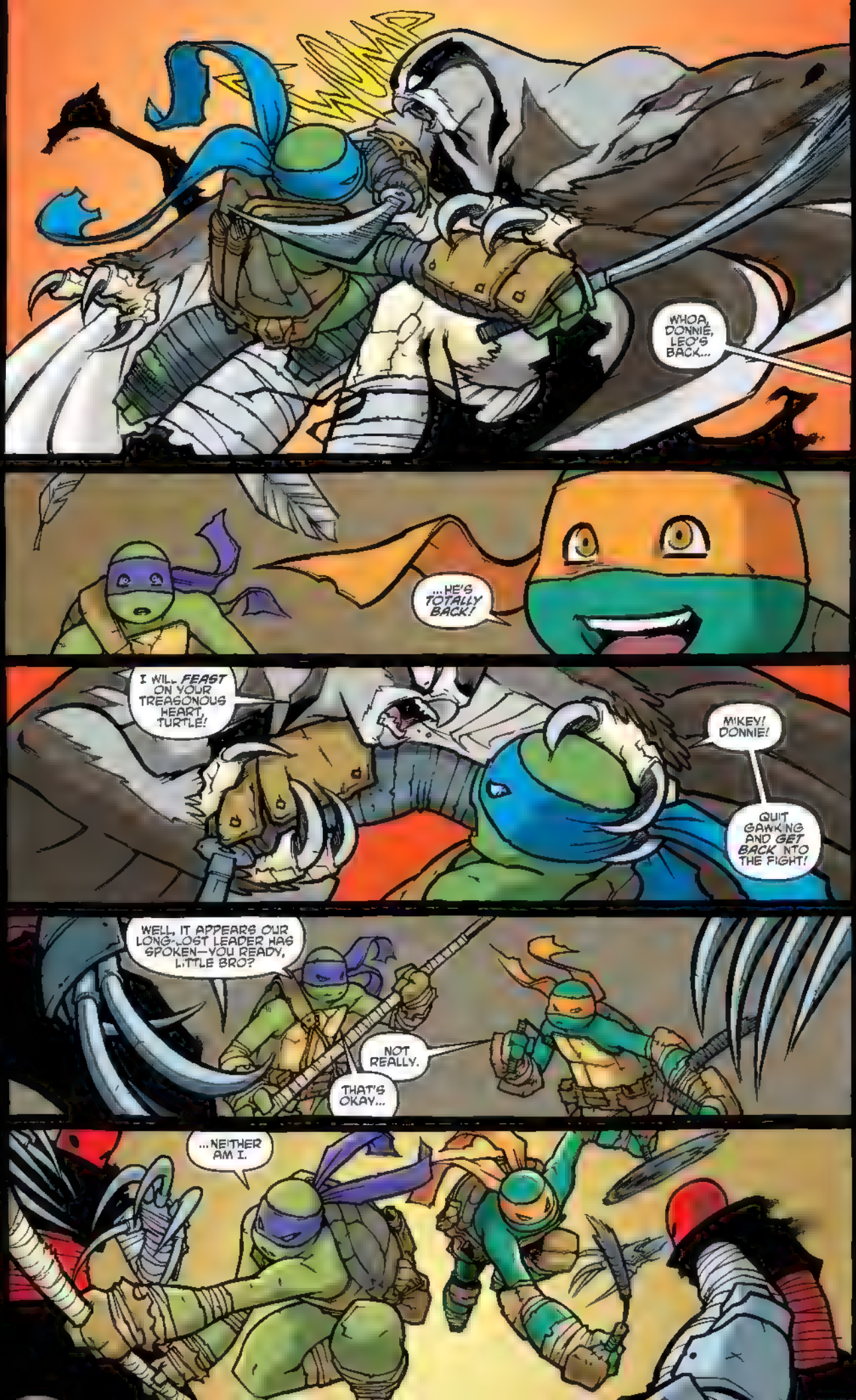
...I WAS GONNA ASK *YOU* THE SAME THING.

ART BY KEVIN EASTMAN
COLORS BY RONDA PATTISON

art by SOPHIE CAMPBELL

ISSUE #32

BACK AWAY, NOW.
AH... THE TRAITOR ONCE CALLED CHUNIN.
I AM KOYA, ASSASSIN PREDATOR.
MASTER SHREDDER SENDS HIS REGARDS, PREY.
YOUR MASTER, BIRD...
...NOT MINE!


WHOA, DONNIE, LEO'S BACK...
...HE'S TOTALLY BACK!
I WILL FEAST ON YOUR TREASONOUS HEART, TURTLE!
MIKEY! DONNIE!
QUIT GAWKING AND GET BACK INTO THE FIGHT!
WELL, IT APPEARS OUR LONG-LOST LEADER HAS SPOKEN—YOU READY, LITTLE BRO?
NOT REALLY.
THAT'S OKAY...
...NEITHER AM I.

RRK!
WHOP
FATHER!
UNF!
DID SHE HURT YOU?
NO...
...I AM FINE.
GOOD TO HEAR.
FSK
AND IT IS GOOD TO HAVE YOU WITH US AGAIN, MY SON.
NOT FOR LONG.

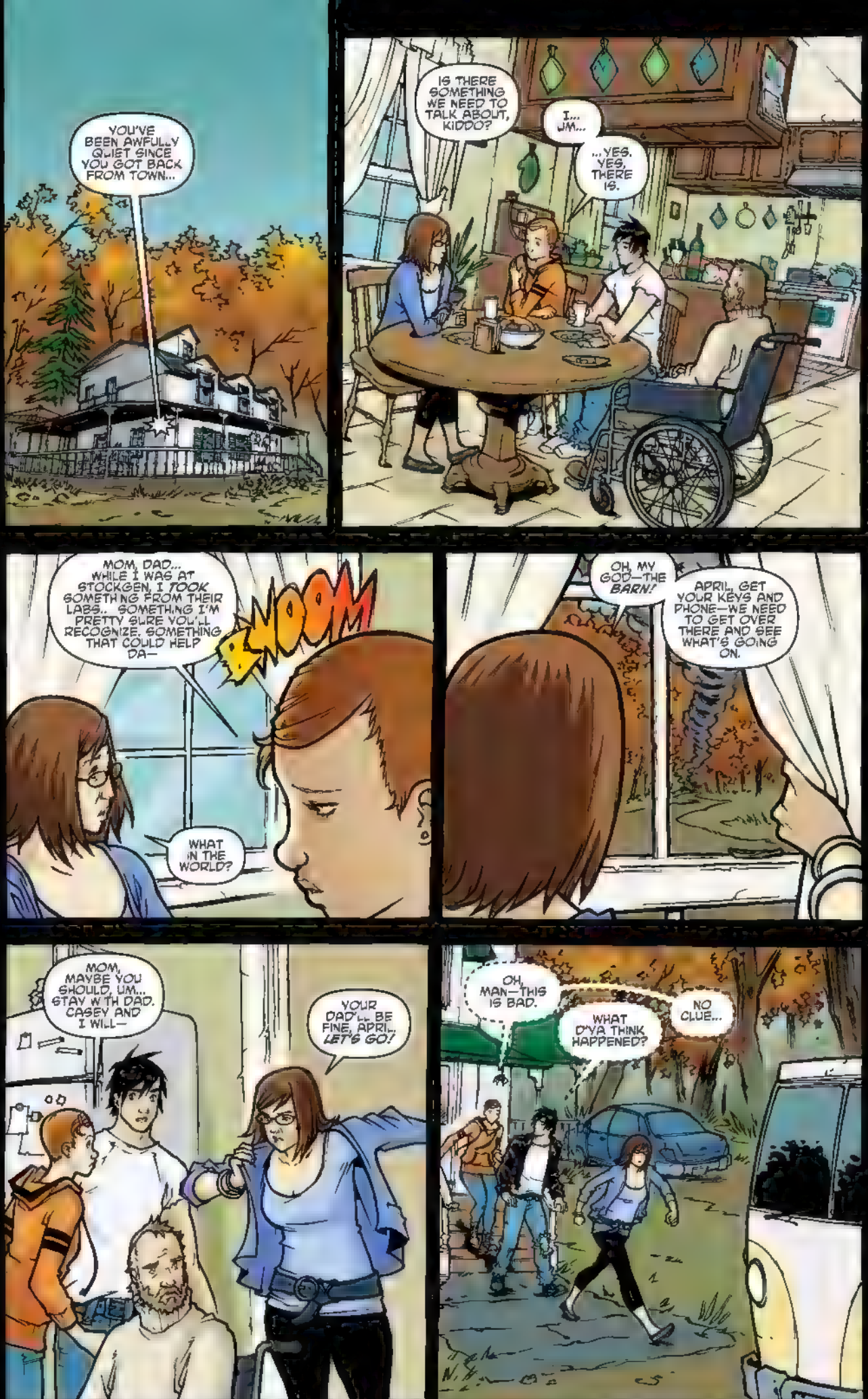
LOOK OU—
YAGH!
SHKKKK
LEONARDO, YOUR SHOULDER...
HURTS LIKE HELL.
GOOD THING IT'S NOT MY THROWING ARM.
SWIT
GYAK!
SHK
SHK
SHUA

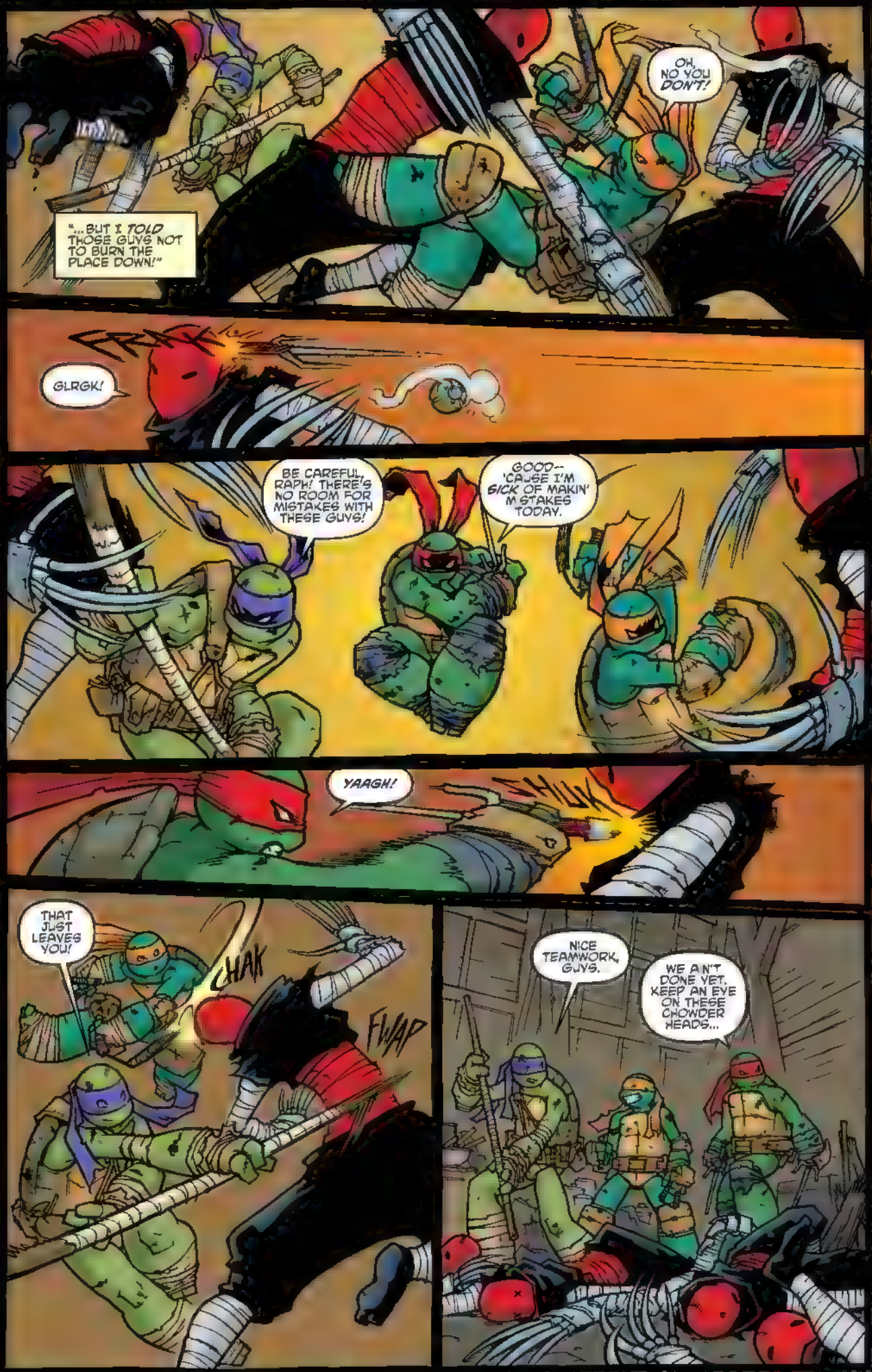
DONNIE, I THINK WE'RE GETTIN' TO THEM!
YEAH.
NOT SO TOUGH WITHOUT SURPRISE ON THEIR SIDE.
THEN AGAIN...
CRAP!

I KNEW WE COULDN'T TRUST YOU, DAMN FOOT MUTT!
GET... UNF' GET OFF ME!
I DON'T THINK SO!
YANK!
YOU BROUGHT THEM HERE! IT HAD TO BE YOU!
WHAT?! WAIT! I DIDN'T CALL ANYONE! I—
GRAHH!
KRUNCH

MI—
KOFF
MIKEY?
YEAH, DUDE... KOFF I'M GOOD
AND SO ARE THEY, DAMMIT!
WAIT— THERE'S ONLY TWO. WHERE'S THE OTHER GUY?
I DON'T KNOW, MIKE, BUT THE WAY THESE GUYS MOVE...
...HE COULD BE ANYWHERE!

WHERE... UNF... IS SHE...?
OH.
NO!
I TOLD YOU I WASN'T FOOT ANYMORE, RAPHAEL.
WHUMP
BUT... WHEN THEY CAME, I SAW YOU. YOU STOOD AS DE LIKE... LIKE YOU KNEW THEY WERE COMIN'.
NO... I FROZE BECAUSE I SAW THEY WERE ASSASSINS. I THOUGHT THEY WERE HERE TO KILL ME.
THEN THAT MEANS...
YOU WERE WRONG
AND SO WAS I.
"WHY THE LONG FACE?"


YOU'VE BEEN AWFULLY QUIET SINCE YOU GOT BACK FROM TOWN...
IS THERE SOMETHING WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT, KIDDO?
I... UM...
...YES. YES, THERE IS.
MOM, DAD... WHILE I WAS AT STOCKGEN, I TOOK SOMETHING FROM THEIR LABS.. SOMETHING I'M PRETTY SURE YOU'LL RECOGNIZE. SOMETHING THAT COULD HELP DA—
KNOOM
WHAT IN THE WORLD?
OH, MY GOD—THE BARN!
APRIL, GET YOUR KEYS AND PHONE—WE NEED TO GET OVER THERE AND SEE WHAT'S GOING ON.
MOM, MAYBE YOU SHOULD, UM... STAY W TH DAD. CASEY AND I WILL—
YOUR DAD'LL BE FINE, APRIL. LET'S GO!
OH, MAN—THIS IS BAD.
WHAT D'YA THINK HAPPENED?
NO CLUE...


"...BUT I TOLD THOSE GUYS NOT TO BURN THE PLACE DOWN!"
OH, NO YOU DON'T!
CRACK
GLRGK!
BE CAREFUL, RAPH! THERE'S NO ROOM FOR MISTAKES WITH THESE GUYS!
GOOD-- 'CAUSE I'M SICK OF MAKIN' M STAKES TODAY.
YAAGH!
THAT JUST LEAVES YOU!
CHAK
FWAP
NICE TEAMWORK, GUYS.
WE AIN'T DONE YET. KEEP AN EYE ON THESE CHOWDER HEADS...

TRAITORS!
...I WANT A PIECE OF THAT STINKIN' BIRD.
I WILL STRANGLE YOU WITH YOUR OWN ENTRAILS.
POW
I WILL FLAY THE SKIN FROM YOUR WRETCHED BONES.
GYAH!
YOU SICK, TWISTED— UFF!
AND I WILL GORGE MYSELF ON YOUR FLESH.
GORGE ON THIS!

WHAT THE—?
MOM, THERE'S... THERE'S SOMETHING REALLY IMPORTANT I NEED TO TELL Y—
WHAT... WHAT ARE THOSE?
MOM! GET BACK IN THE VAN!

YOU ARE STRONG, REPTILE.
UHH!
BUT EVEN THE STRONGEST HAVE WEAKNESSES!
SKREE!
OH, MY...
MOM!
NO!

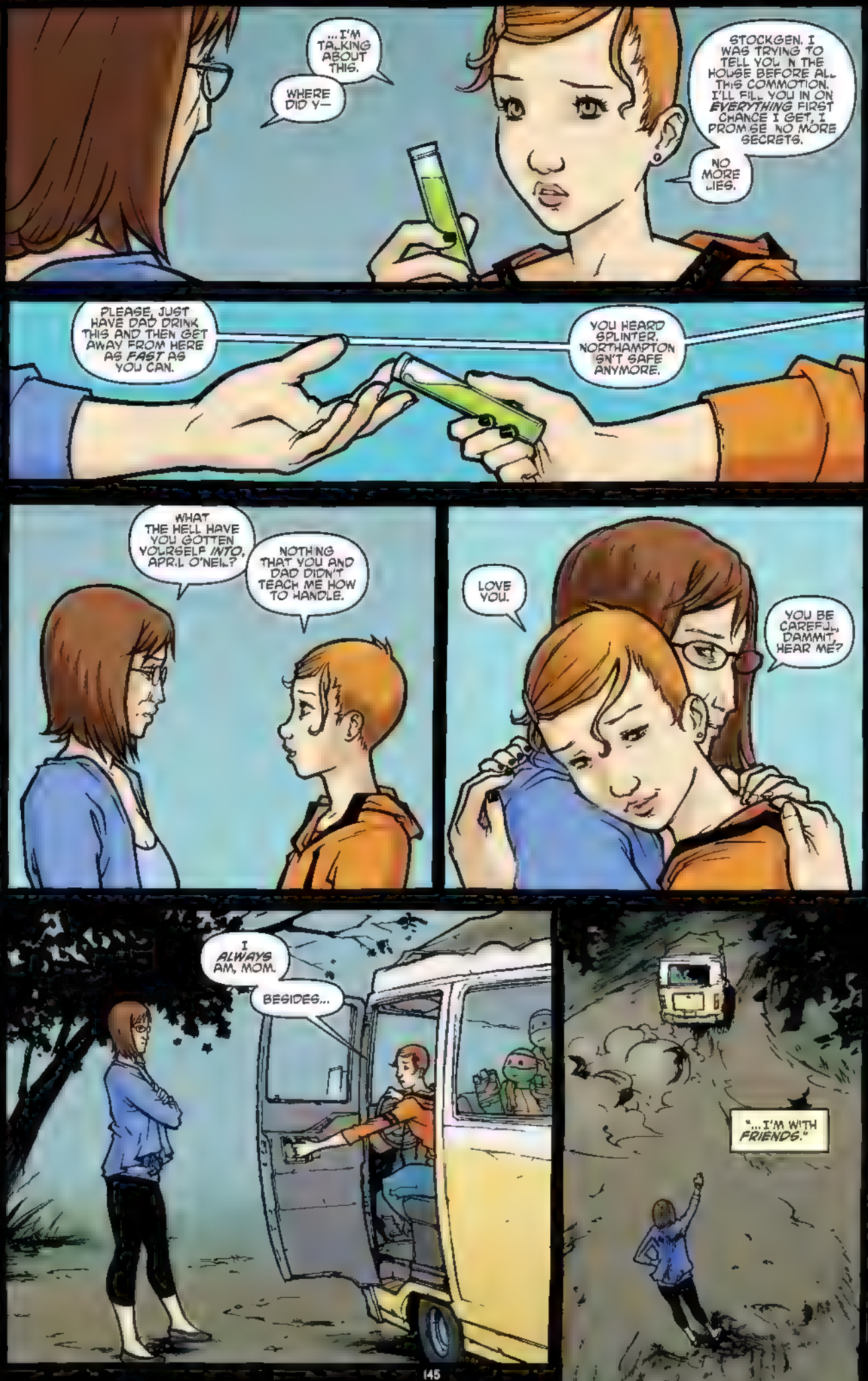
YEE-HAW!
KRRZZM
WHOMP

RKMPKK
OH, MAN, THAT WAS AWESOME! CAN I DO IT AGAIN?
MAYBE LATER, MIKEY...
...WE'VE GOT BUSINESS TO TAKE CARE OF FIRST.
DO IT, REPTILE. PROVE WHO YOU TRULY ARE.
KILL ME.

NO, BIRD. I WON'T KILL YOU.
SHLP
BUT YOU CAN STILL DIE IF THAT'S WHAT YOU REALLY WANT.
GYAH!

WHAT DID YOU—?!
WHAT I HAD TO DO.
YOUR BLEEDING WON'T STOP W THOUT MEDICAL CARE. YOU HAVE MAYBE AN HOUR.
LEAVE OR DIE. YOUR CHOICE.
I WILL RETURN, TRAITOR.
RETURN ALL YOU WANT— WE WON'T BE HERE.
AM I DREAM NG? PLEASE, SOMEONE TELL ME I'M DREAMING.
OKAY... YOU'RE DREAM N'.
STOP IT, CASEY— THAT'S NOT HEL.PING.
ASSASSINS! VANISH! NOW!
THIS IS NOT OVER! MY EYES SEE FOR MILES. I WILL F:ND YOU AGA:N!

WE MUST LEAVE IMMEDIATELY, MY SONS.
MRS O'NEIL?
THIS PLACE IS NO LONGER SAFE—FOR ANYONE.
A-APRIL, THE... THE RAT'S TALKING... TO YOU.
I KNOW, MOM, IT'S OKAY—TRY NOT TO FAINT.
REMEMBER WHEN I SAID THERE WERE SOME FISHY THINGS GOING ON AT STOCKGEN? WELL, SOME OF IT WAS MUTATION TESTING.
THESE THINGS ARE... MUTANTS?
YES, MRS. O'NEIL... WE ARE MUTANTS. MY NAME IS SPLINTER, AND THESE ARE MY SONS.
PLEASE KNOW, YOU HAVE MY DEEPEST APOLOGIES FOR THE DAMAGES TO YOUR PROPERTY. AND FOR THIS STARTLING REVELATION, AS WELL.
BUT WE CANNOT RISK ANY FURTHER EXPOSURE--NOR SHOULD YOU—AND FOR THAT I, TOO, AM SORRY.
I... I...
...OKAY.
APRIL, NOW—
MOM, PLEASE, WE DON'T HAVE MUCH TIME—I JUST NEED YOU TO LISTEN.
YOU WERE RIGHT—THERE WAS MORE GOING ON AT STOCKGEN. WAY MORE. I CAN'T GO INTO DETAILS RIGHT NOW, BUT THE HEALING COMPOUND—THE OOZE—THAT DAD WAS DEVELOPING? IT STILL EXISTS AND IT WORKS...
...IT REALLY WORKS.
APRIL—WHAT IN THE WORLD ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
THIS, MOM...


...I'M TALKING ABOUT THIS.
WHERE DID Y—
STOCKGEN. I WAS TRYING TO TELL YOU IN THE HOUSE BEFORE ALL THIS COMMOTION. I'LL FILL YOU IN ON *EVERYTHING* FIRST CHANCE I GET, I PROMISE. NO MORE SECRETS.
NO MORE LIES.
PLEASE, JUST HAVE DAD DRINK THIS AND THEN GET AWAY FROM HERE AS *FAST* AS YOU CAN.
YOU HEARD SPLINTER. NORTHAMPTON ISN'T SAFE ANYMORE.
WHAT THE HELL HAVE YOU GOTTEN YOURSELF *INTO*, APRIL O'NEIL?
NOTHING THAT YOU AND DAD DIDN'T TEACH ME HOW TO HANDLE.
LOVE YOU.
YOU BE CAREFUL, DAMMIT, HEAR ME?
I *ALWAYS* AM, MOM.
BESIDES...
"...I'M WITH *FRIENDS*."

EVERYTHING'S GONNA BE OKAY, APRIL—YOU'LL SEE. YOU DID THE RIGHT THING.
YES, YOU DID MISS O'NEIL...
...I AM PROUD OF EVERYONE'S ACTIONS TODAY. WE ARE UNITED AND WHOLE ONCE AGAIN.
ONE BIG, BUTT-KICKIN' FAMILY!
YES, MICHELANGELO, BUT NOW IS NOT THE TIME FOR CELEBRATION.
WE RETURN TO NEW YORK NOW TO RECTIFY PAST MISTAKES.
WE HAVE BEEN ON THE RUN FROM OROKU SAKI OVER THE COURSE OF TWO LIFETIMES AND, STILL, HE PURSUES US.
UNDERSTAND, MY SONS, THAT AS OF THIS MOMENT...
...WE ARE THROUGH WITH RUNNING.
Thank you for visiting NORTHAMPTON Come again
"THERE'S BEEN A CHANGE OF PLANS..."

...WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO LEAVE NORTHAMPTON.
LEAVE?
YES SOMETHING... SOMETHING *IMPORTANT'S* COME UP.
THE FIRE?
THERE WAS NO FIRE—JUST A LOT OF SMOKE AND STRUCTURAL DAMAGE... NOTHING ELSE.
BUT... WE NEED TO HEAD TO *NEW YORK*, JOHN. TODAY. NOW.
NOW? WHY?
WHY?
SO WE CAN BE CLOSER TO APRIL, JOHN. MY GUT'S TELLING ME SHE *NEEDS* US THERE ASAP.
BUT... HOW...
YOU'LL BE OKAY, HON...
...I HOPE.
EARL GREY
HERE, LOVE—DRINK THIS. IT'LL HELP YOU FOR THE TRIP.

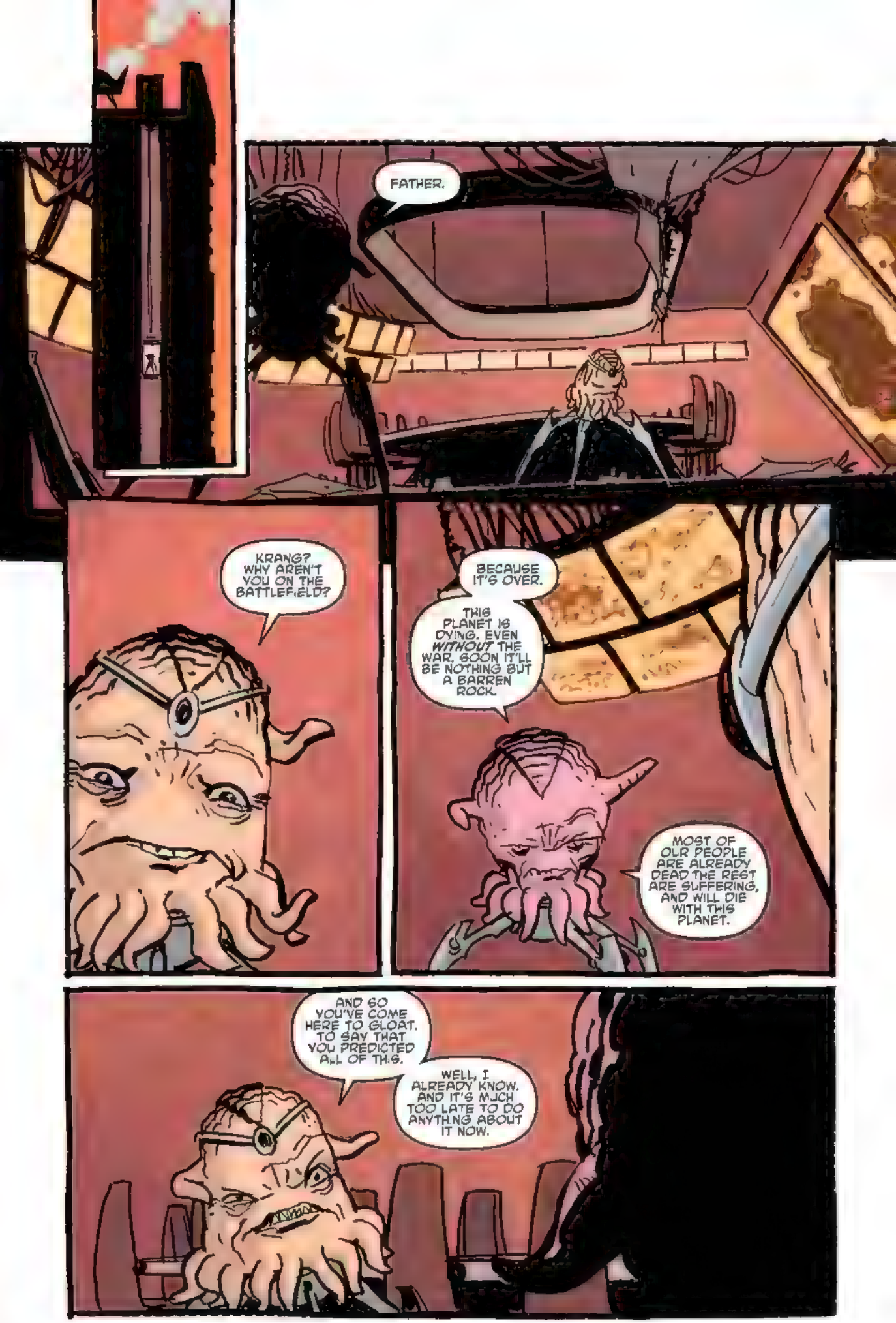
NNNGG...
JOHN! JOHN, ARE YOU—
BETH... I FEEL... I FEEL SO...
OH, MY GOD, THANK YOU...
...THANK YOU!
WHERE... WHERE ON EARTH DID YOU GET THIS?
FROM APRIL, JOHN... FROM OUR BABY.
APRIL? WHERE IS SHE?
WITH FRIENDS, MY LOVE...
"... SHE'S WITH FRIENDS."

PENCILS BY KEVIN EASTMAN
INKS BY BRIAN PATTISON

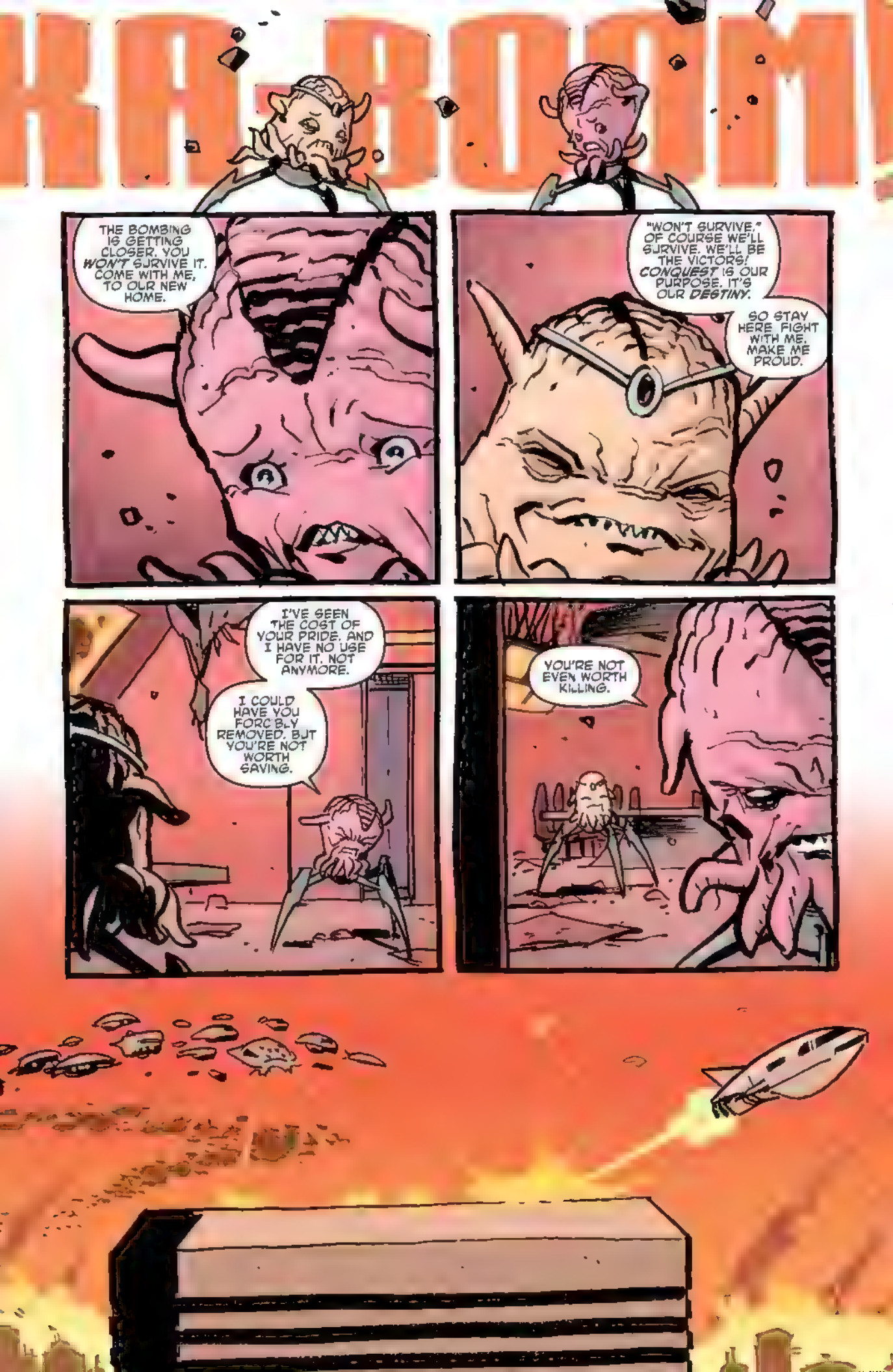
JOIN THE RESISTANCE
TODAY

YEARS AGO, UTROMINON.
LORQA! LORQA! I HAVE A MESSAGE FROM GENERAL KRANG!
YES, YES. WHY ELSE WOULD YOU BE HERE? GO AHEAD.
MY UTROM BRETHREN: I DELIVER THIS MESSAGE WITH A HEAVY HEART.
AS WE NEAR THE END, I WANT TO SAY HOW PROUD I AM OF EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU.
YOU'VE BEEN LIVING IN THAT BUNKER A LONG TIME NOW. BUT YOUR PROJECT—YOUR MISSION—WILL SAVE THE UTROM RACE.
"THE THINGS WE DO TODAY WILL ECHO DOWN, THROUGH GENERATIONS.
"I KNOW IT HAS NOT BEEN EASY. THERE HAVE BEEN SACRIFICES."
BURNOW, ISLAND. NOW.
"AND THERE WILL BE MANY MORE."
BUT THE TIME HAS COME. WE MUST PREPARE FOR DEPARTURE TO THE PLANET EARTH.
THOUGH THE BATTLE RAGES ON, THE WAR IS OVER.

"AND WE'VE LOST"
WE'VE ESCAPED THE WORST OF THE FIGHTING, GENERAL. SHALL I PLOT A COURSE FOR THE EMERGENCY BUNKERS?
NO, NOT YET.
THERE'S ONE THING I HAVE TO DO FIRST


FATHER.
KRANG? WHY AREN'T YOU ON THE BATTLEFIELD?
BECAUSE IT'S OVER.
THIS PLANET IS DYING. EVEN *WITHOUT* THE WAR, SOON IT'LL BE NOTHING BUT A BARREN ROCK.
MOST OF OUR PEOPLE ARE ALREADY DEAD THE REST ARE SUFFERING, AND WILL DIE WITH THIS PLANET.
AND SO YOU'VE COME HERE TO GLOAT. TO SAY THAT YOU PREDICTED ALL OF THIS.
WELL, I ALREADY KNOW. AND IT'S MUCH TOO LATE TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT NOW.

THAT'S WHERE YOU'RE *WRONG*.
YEARS AGO, I TASKED THE BRIGHTEST SCIENTISTS OF THE UTROM EMPIRE WITH CREATING NEW OOZE TECHNOLOGIES—A WAY TO KEEP UTROMS ALIVE, IN STASIS, WITH ONLY WHAT LITTLE OOZE STILL REMAINS.
I KNEW *NOTHING* ABOUT THIS!
WHICH IS HOW I INTENDED IT. YOU WOULD HAVE DONE EVERYTHING YOU COULD TO UNDERMINE ME.
BUT THAT DOESN'T MATTER NOW. WHAT MATTERS IS THAT THE PROJECT WAS A *SUCCESS*. WE CAN USE THE INTER-DIMENSIONAL PORTALS TO ESCAPE THIS DYING WORLD. I FOUND AN ISLAND ON THE PLANET EARTH—
EARTH! HA! I REMEMBER HOW WELL IT WENT THE *LAST* TIME YOU VISITED THAT WRETCHED PLANET.
LAST TIME, I MADE THE MISTAKE OF TRYING TO FORM ALLIANCES. THIS TIME, I'LL BE THERE TO CONQUER.
AND TO CREATE A *NEW* HOME FOR OUR PEOPLE!


KA-BOOM!
THE BOMBING IS GETTING CLOSER. YOU WON'T SURVIVE IT. COME WITH ME, TO OUR NEW HOME.
"WON'T SURVIVE." OF COURSE WE'LL SURVIVE. WE'LL BE THE VICTORS! CONQUEST IS OUR PURPOSE. IT'S OUR DESTINY.
SO STAY HERE. FIGHT WITH ME. MAKE ME PROUD.
I'VE SEEN THE COST OF YOUR PRIDE. AND I HAVE NO USE FOR IT. NOT ANYMORE.
I COULD HAVE YOU FORCIBLY REMOVED. BUT YOU'RE NOT WORTH SAVING.
YOU'RE NOT EVEN WORTH KILLING.

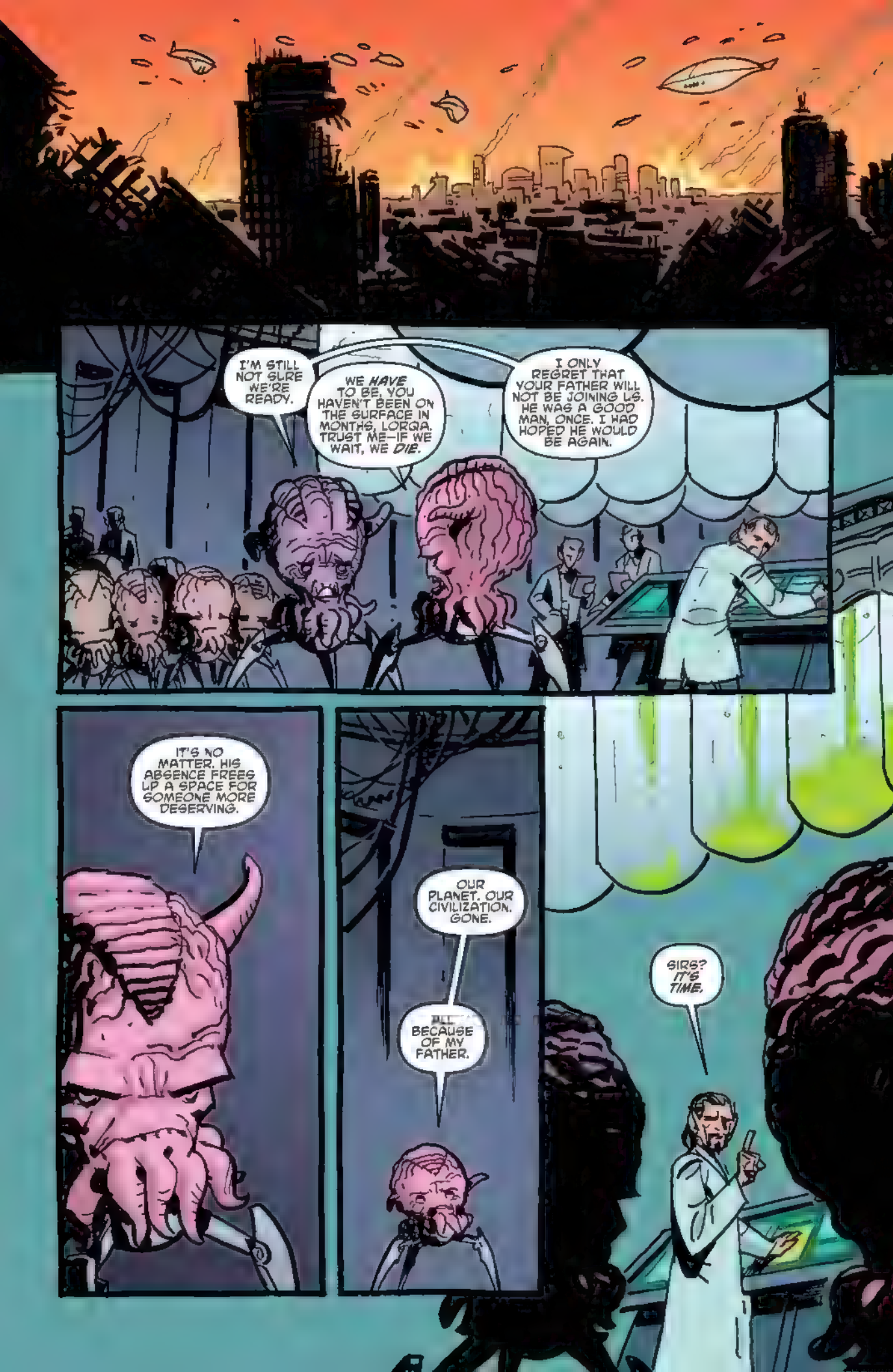
RRRRRRAGH!
EVERYTHING... EVERYTHING I'VE DONE.
EVERYTHING I'VE BUILT.
IT'S ALL BURNT TO THE GROUND.

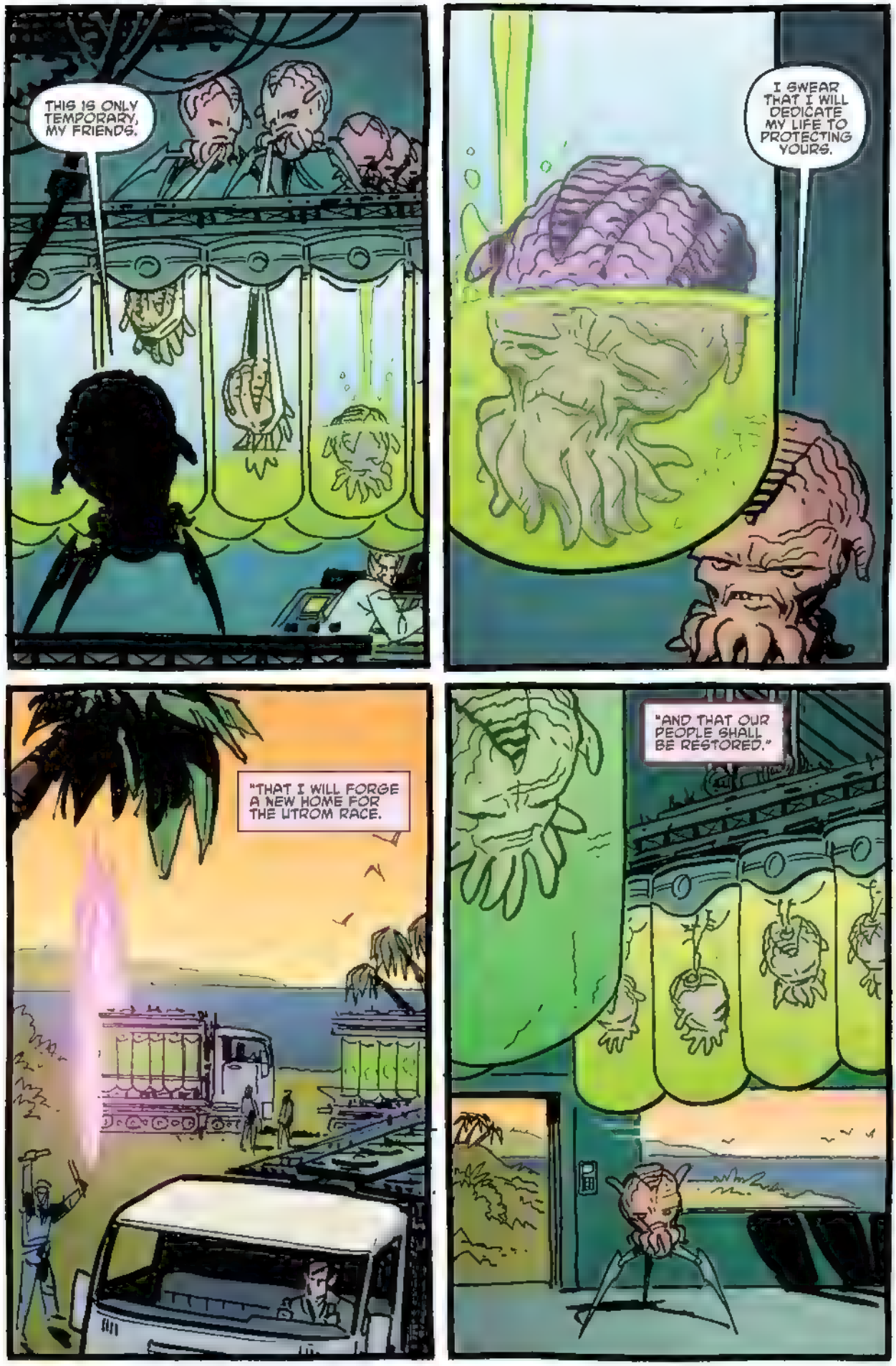
THE POWER IS BACK ON.
WHICH MEANS IT'S TIME FOR THE NEXT STEP OF MY PLAN.
IF I WANT TO GO THROUGH WITH IT.
OR I COULD STILL ESCAPE. THIS IS MY LAST, BEST CHANCE TO SLIP AWAY. DESTROY THIS BODY. DESTROY MYSELF.
I'M SO TIRED OF FIGHTING. I DON'T WANT TO BE HERE ANYMORE. TRAPPED AND HOPELESS, STUCK BETWEEN TWO EVIL MEN.
ONE OF THEM HAS KILLED THOUSANDS. INCLUDING MY OWN FAMILY. HE OPERATES OUT OF A TWISTED SENSE OF LOYALTY TO HIS RACE.
THE OTHER IS A PURER EVIL. MOTIVATED ENTIRELY BY HIS OWN SELF-INTEREST.
PART OF ME JUST WANTS TO END IT ALL. JUST LET IT BE DONE.
BUT I ALSO FEAR THE WORST, IF I LEAVE THESE TWO ON THEIR OWN.

SO THERE'S NO CHOICE. I'VE GOT TO SEND THE MESSAGE OUT. IF I STAY AND FIGHT, I'LL NEED ALL THE HELP I CAN GET.
FUGITOID!
YES? DO YOU NEED HELP IN THE STASIS ROOM?
YOU'RE A PRISONER HERE, FUGITO.D. IT'S TIME WE STARTED TREATING YOU LIKE ONE.
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND. I'M TRYING TO HELP WITH THE—
LOCK HIM DOWN.

ON WHOSE AUTHORITY?
ON MINE. WE'LL LET KRANG DECIDE WHAT TO DO WITH YOU, OR YOU CAN RESIST, AND I'LL KILL YOU NOW.
I'M NOT SURE IF I HAD ENOUGH TIME—IF THE MESSAGE GOT OUT.
NO. IT HAD TO. IT HAD TO GET OUT.
TOO MUCH IS DEPENDING ON IT FOR FAILURE TO BE AN OPTION.
I... I'M SORRY, HONEYCUTT.
BUT I JUST DON'T KNOW!

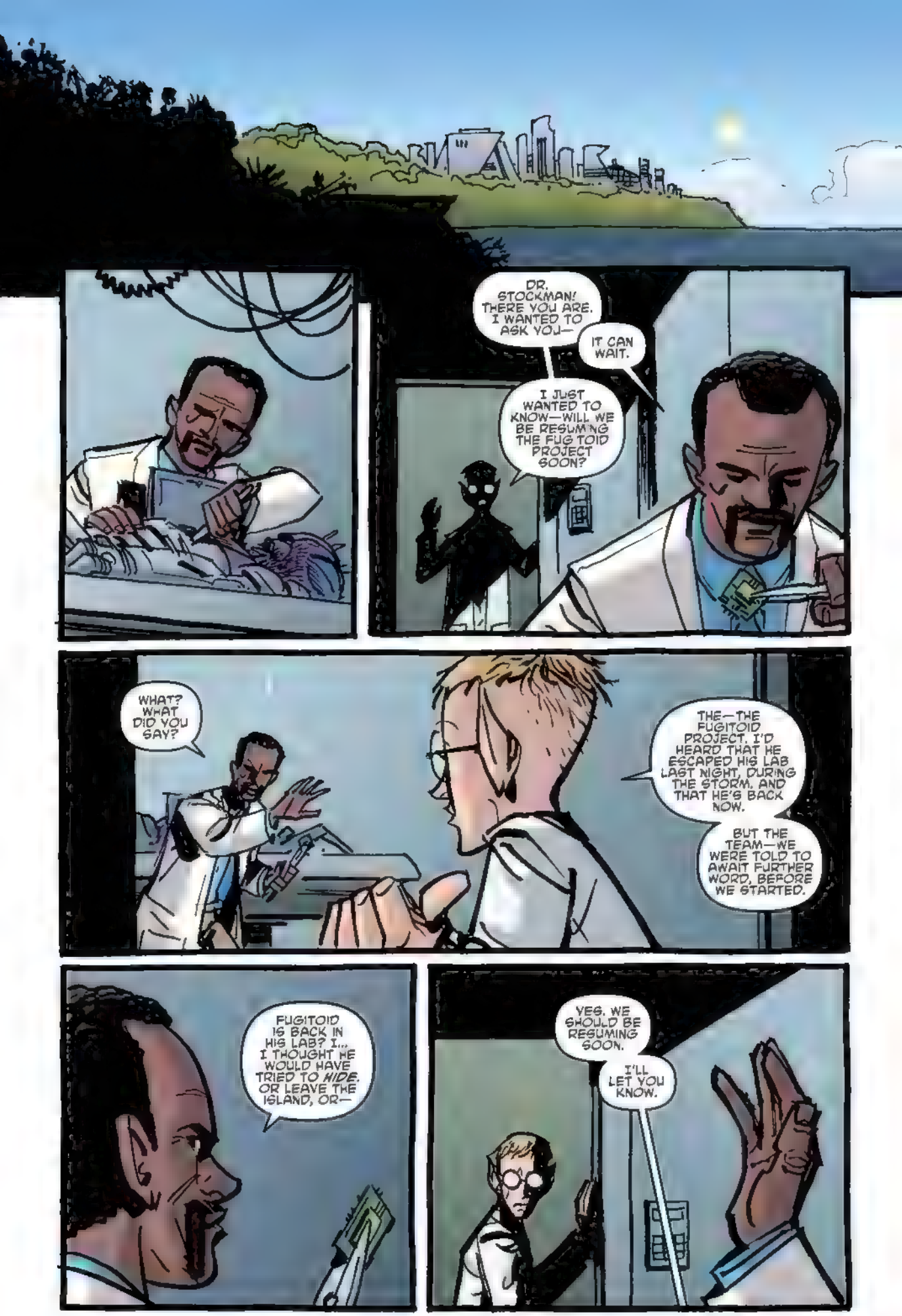
EVERYBODY GET OUT.


I'M STILL NOT SURE WE'RE READY.
WE *HAVE* TO BE. YOU HAVEN'T BEEN ON THE SURFACE IN MONTHS, LORQA. TRUST ME—IF WE WAIT, WE *DIE*.
I ONLY REGRET THAT YOUR FATHER WILL NOT BE JOINING US. HE WAS A GOOD MAN, ONCE. I HAD HOPED HE WOULD BE AGAIN.
IT'S NO MATTER. HIS ABSENCE FREES UP A SPACE FOR SOMEONE MORE DESERVING.
OUR PLANET. OUR CIVILIZATION. GONE.
BECAUSE OF MY FATHER.
SIRS? *IT'S TIME.*


THIS IS ONLY TEMPORARY, MY FRIENDS.
I SWEAR THAT I WILL DEDICATE MY LIFE TO PROTECTING YOURS.
"THAT I WILL FORGE A NEW HOME FOR THE UTROM RACE.
"AND THAT OUR PEOPLE SHALL BE RESTORED."

SOON.

SOON. THE TECHNODROME IS GOING TO BE FINISHED SOON. AND WE HAVE TO STOP IT.
BUT I CAN'T GET FATHER TO LISTEN. I CAN'T...
I CAN'T EVEN TELL HIM WHAT WE NEED TO DO.
THIS NOTEBOOK HAS SO MUCH INFORMATION. BUT NOT EVERYTHING, YOU KNOW?
SO THIS HUGE THREAT—THIS PLANETARY THREAT—IS JUST LOOMING OUT THERE.
MEANWHILE, WE'RE JUST FOUR NINJAS AND A COUPLE OF OUR FRIENDS. HOW ARE WE SUPPOSED TO HANDLE IT?
WE HANDLE IT THE SAME WAY WE HANDLE EVERYTHING, DONNIE.
WE MAKE A PLAN.
AND THEN WE FIGHT.

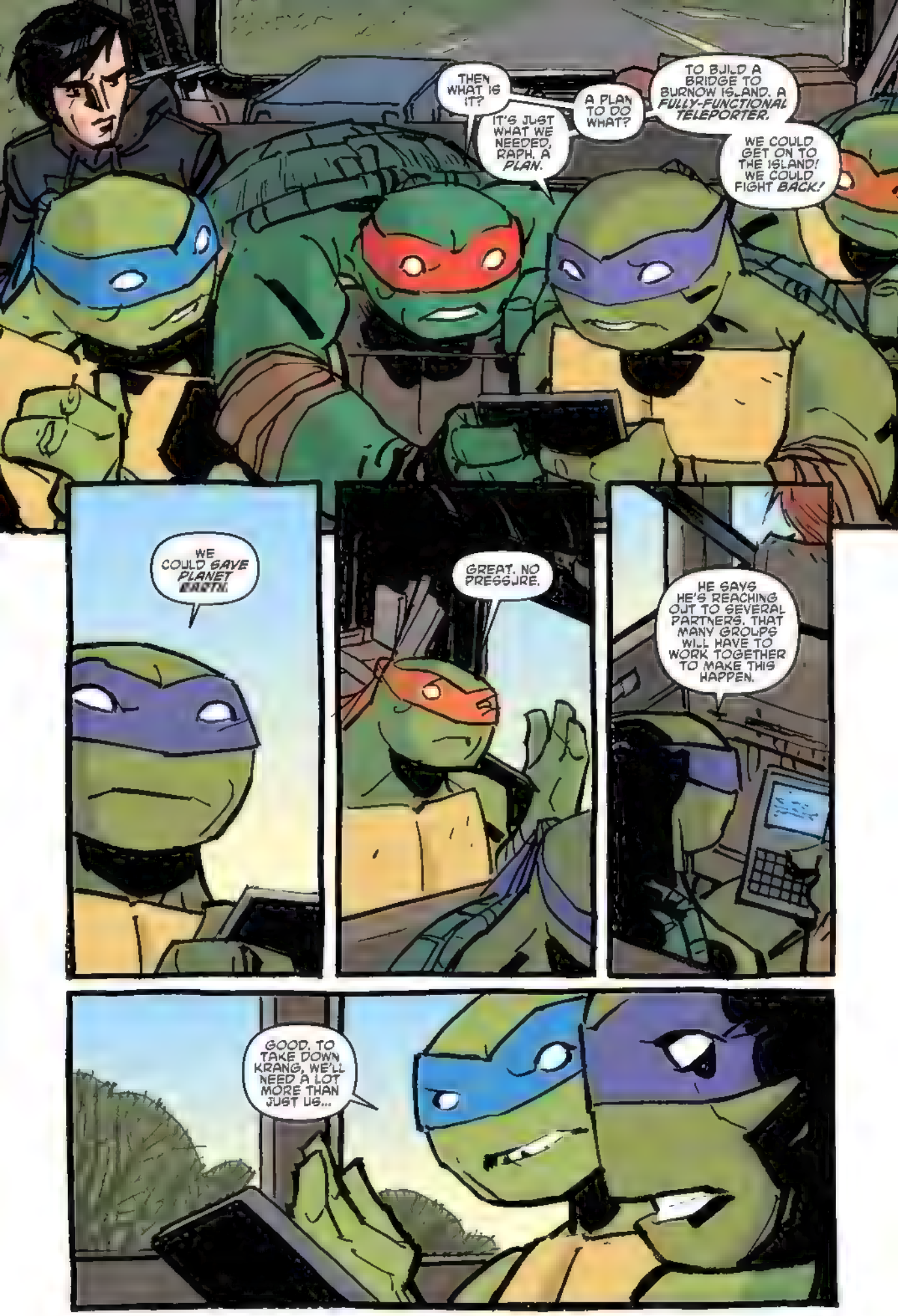

DR. STOCKMAN! THERE YOU ARE. I WANTED TO ASK YOU—
IT CAN WAIT.
I JUST WANTED TO KNOW—WILL WE BE RESUMING THE FUGITOID PROJECT SOON?
WHAT? WHAT DID YOU SAY?
THE—THE FUGITOID PROJECT. I'D HEARD THAT HE ESCAPED HIS LAB LAST NIGHT, DURING THE STORM. AND THAT HE'S BACK NOW.
BUT THE TEAM—WE WERE TOLD TO AWAIT FURTHER WORD, BEFORE WE STARTED.
FUGITOID IS BACK IN HIS LAB? I... I THOUGHT HE WOULD HAVE TRIED TO *HIDE*, OR LEAVE THE ISLAND, OR—
YES. WE SHOULD BE RESUMING SOON.
I'LL LET YOU KNOW.

I GUESS WE WON'T NEED YOUR SEARCH AND DESTROY MISS ON.
INSTEAD, IT'S JUST DESTROY.
AND I CAN DO THAT MYSELF.
DR. STOCKMAN, COULD YOU APPROVE THIS SHIPMENT OF--
FINE. APPROVED.
I HAVE A ROBOT TO DESTROY.
OH. THERE YOU ARE.

GENERAL KRANG AND I WERE JUST DISCUSSING LAST NIGHT'S MALFUNCTIONS.
I TOLD HIM HOW YOU HELPED ME GET THE OOZE FLOWING AGAIN, ONCE THE ISLAND'S ELECTRIC [illegible] RESTORED.
WITHOUT YOUR HELP, I'M NOT SURE THE UTROMS WOULD HAVE SURVIVED.
I CAN ONLY HOPE HE GETS IT– I'M GIVING HIM A LIFELINE. WE'RE IN THIS TOGETHER, NOW.
GOOD WORK, STOCKMAN.
OF COURSE, IF YOU'D DONE A BETTER JOB WITH THE STORM PREPARATION, THE ENTIRE THING MIGHT HAVE BEEN AVOIDED.
YES, OF COURSE I'M JUST GLAD IT... WORKED OUT.
DID YOU NEED SOMETHING ELSE, DOCTOR?
JUST TO CHECK ON THE FUGITOID, BUT I CAN SEE THAT EVERYTHING IS FINE.

I MAY HAVE MISJUDGED YOU, FUGITOID.
I DON'T KNOW WHY YOU HELPED ME. BUT IT'S SOMETHING I WON'T SOON FORGET.
I JUST...
I'M JUST TIRED OF FIGHTING, GENERAL. ALL I WANT TO DO IS SURVIVE. THAT'S ALL THAT MATTERS ANYMORE.
AND HELPING YOU SEEMS LIKE THE BEST WAY TO DO THAT.
I DON'T KNOW IF HE'LL BELIEVE ME. I DON'T KNOW IF HE'LL LET ME STAY CONSCIOUS. I DON'T KNOW IF MY MESSAGE WAS INTERCEPTED
IT COULD ALL FALL APART.
WELL. SURVIVAL IS A MOTIVE THAT I CAN CERTAINLY UNDERSTAND.

69
63
...WHAT?
DING
GUYS. GUYS! I HAVE A MESSAGE! FROM THE FUGITOID!
HE'S ALIVE?! IS... IS HE OKAY?
I GUESS SO. THIS ISN'T REALLY A "HEY, WISH YOU WERE HERE" TYPE MESSAGE.

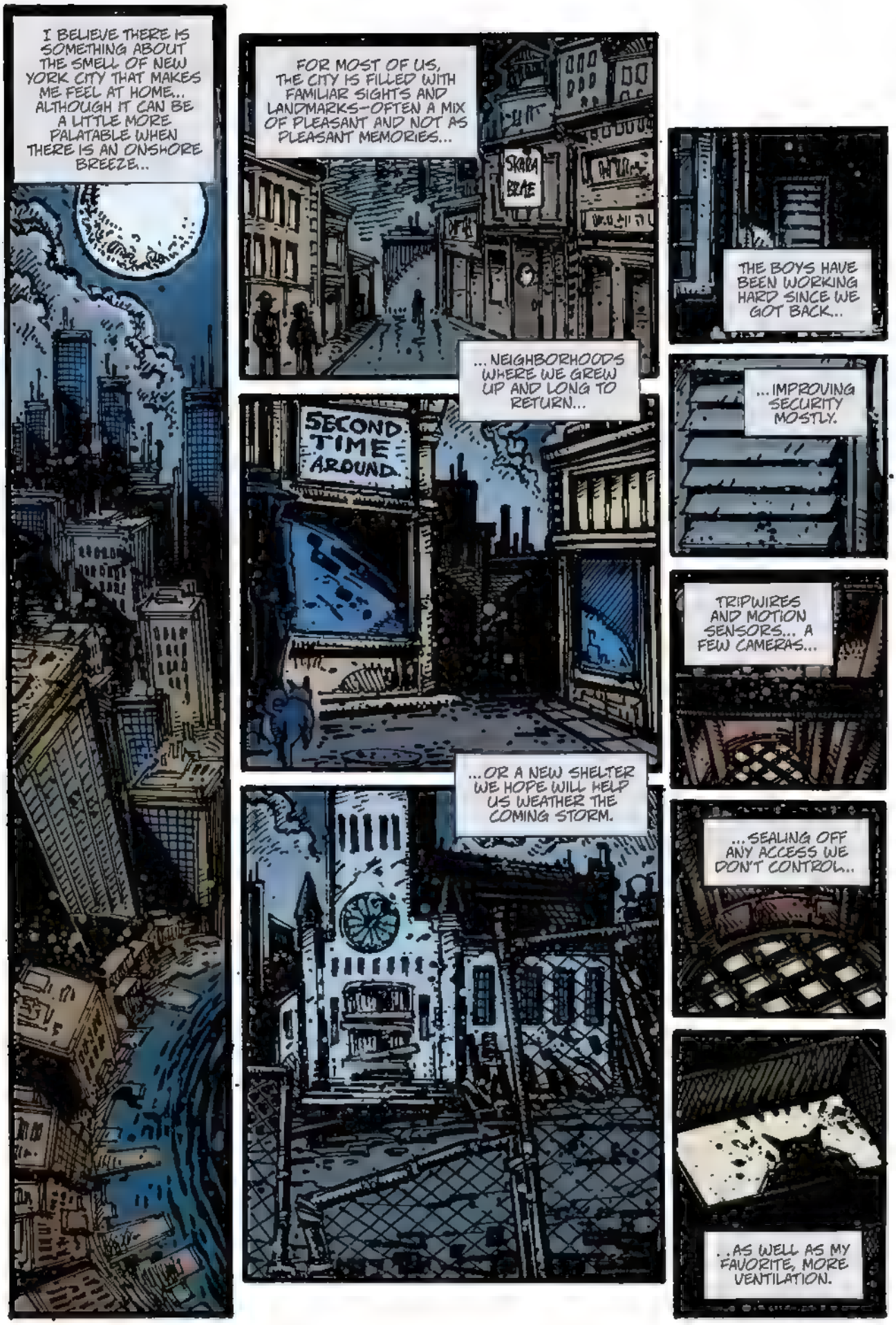

THEN WHAT IS IT?
A PLAN TO DO WHAT?
TO BUILD A BRIDGE TO BURNOW ISLAND. A FULLY-FUNCTIONAL TELEPORTER.
IT'S JUST WHAT WE NEEDED, RAPH. A PLAN.
WE COULD GET ON TO THE ISLAND! WE COULD FIGHT BACK!
WE COULD SAVE PLANET EARTH.
GREAT. NO PRESSURE.
HE SAYS HE'S REACHING OUT TO SEVERAL PARTNERS. THAT MANY GROUPS WILL HAVE TO WORK TOGETHER TO MAKE THIS HAPPEN.
GOOD. TO TAKE DOWN KRANG, WE'LL NEED A LOT MORE THAN JUST US...

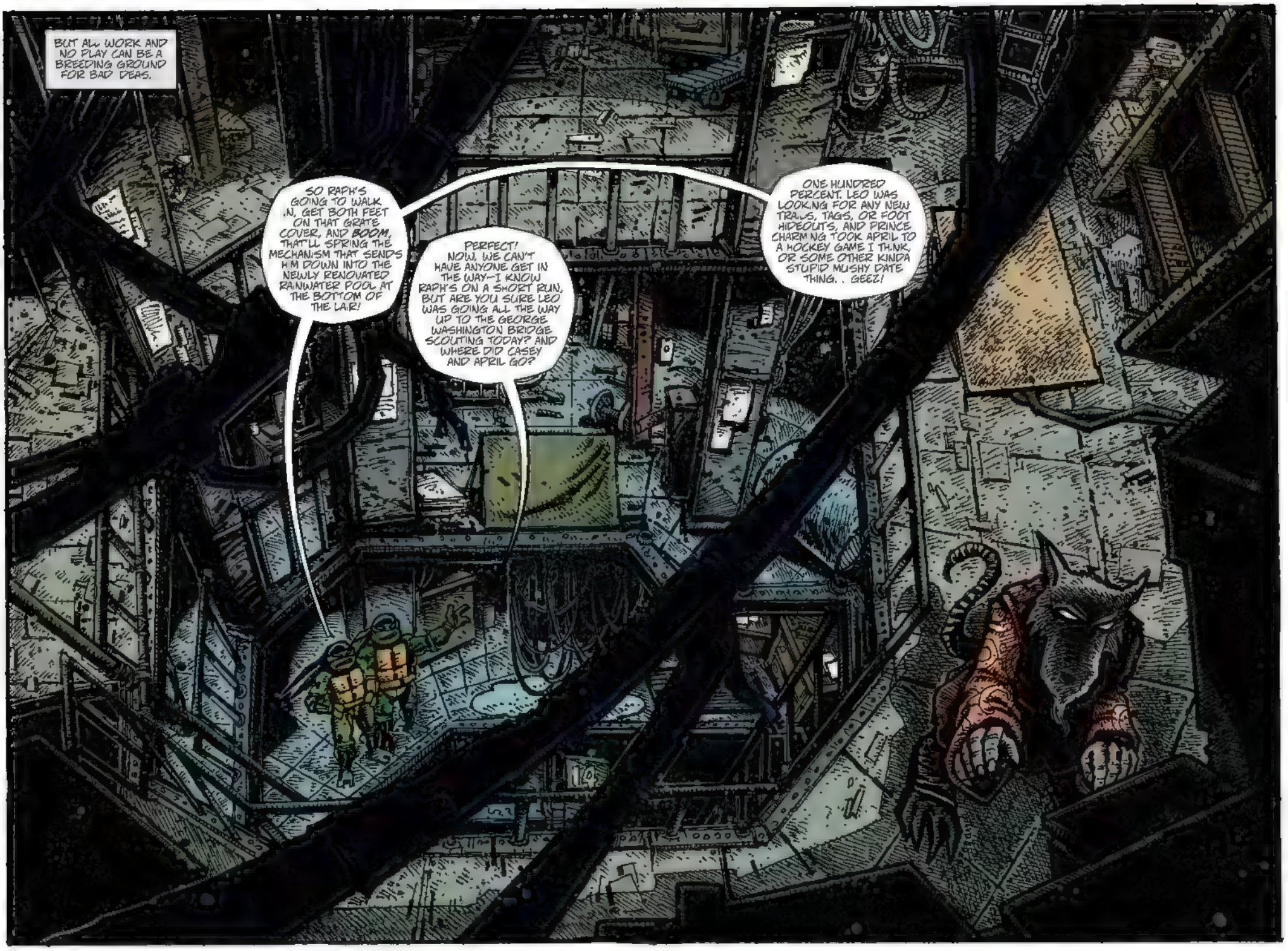
"...WE'LL NEED AN ARMY."
I JUST RECEIVED THE MOST INTERESTING MESSAGE.

ART BY NICK PITARRA
LETTERS BY GREG AND FAKE PETRE

ANNUAL 2014

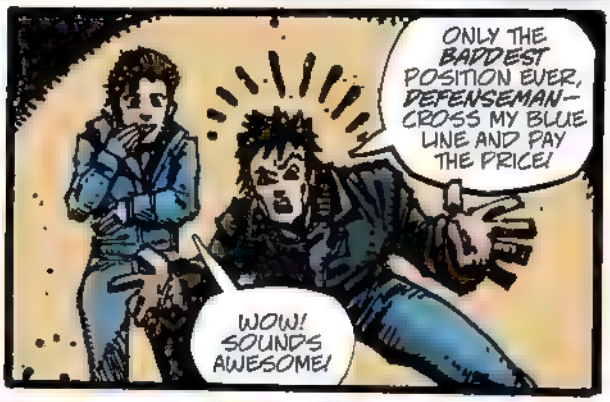
KEVIN EASTMAN
IAN HERRING


I BELIEVE THERE IS SOMETHING ABOUT THE SMELL OF NEW YORK CITY THAT MAKES ME FEEL AT HOME... ALTHOUGH IT CAN BE A LITTLE MORE PALATABLE WHEN THERE IS AN ONSHORE BREEZE...
FOR MOST OF US, THE CITY IS FILLED WITH FAMILIAR SIGHTS AND LANDMARKS—OFTEN A MIX OF PLEASANT AND NOT AS PLEASANT MEMORIES...
SKARA BRAE
...NEIGHBORHOODS WHERE WE GREW UP AND LONG TO RETURN...
SECOND TIME AROUND
...OR A NEW SHELTER WE HOPE WILL HELP US WEATHER THE COMING STORM.
THE BOYS HAVE BEEN WORKING HARD SINCE WE GOT BACK...
...IMPROVING SECURITY MOSTLY.
TRIPWIRES AND MOTION SENSORS... A FEW CAMERAS...
...SEALING OFF ANY ACCESS WE DON'T CONTROL...
...AS WELL AS MY FAVORITE, MORE VENTILATION.


BUT ALL WORK AND NO PLAY CAN BE A BREEDING GROUND FOR BAD IDEAS.
SO RAPH'S GOING TO WALK IN, GET BOTH FEET ON THAT GRATE COVER, AND BOOM, THAT'LL SPRING THE MECHANISM THAT SENDS HIM DOWN INTO THE NEWLY RENOVATED RAINWATER POOL AT THE BOTTOM OF THE LAIR!
PERFECT! NOW, WE CAN'T HAVE ANYONE GET IN THE WAY--I KNOW RAPH'S ON A SHORT RUN, BUT ARE YOU SURE LEO WAS GOING ALL THE WAY UP TO THE GEORGE WASHINGTON BRIDGE SCOUTING TODAY? AND WHERE DID CASEY AND APRIL GO?
ONE HUNDRED PERCENT. LEO WAS LOOKING FOR ANY NEW TRAILS, TAGS, OR FOOT HIDEOUTS, AND PRINCE CHARMING TOOK APRIL TO A HOCKEY GAME I THINK, OR SOME OTHER KINDA STUPID MUSHY DATE THING. . GEEZ!

...SO THEN, WHEN MY DAD BROUGHT ME AND MY MOM TO SEE GRETZKY HERE, THAT WAS IT, I KNEW I WANTED TO BE THE BEST HOCKEY PLAYER EVER!
AWESOME, CASE, I DIDN'T KNOW THAT ABOUT YOU...
GARDENS
HOCKEY! TONIGHT!

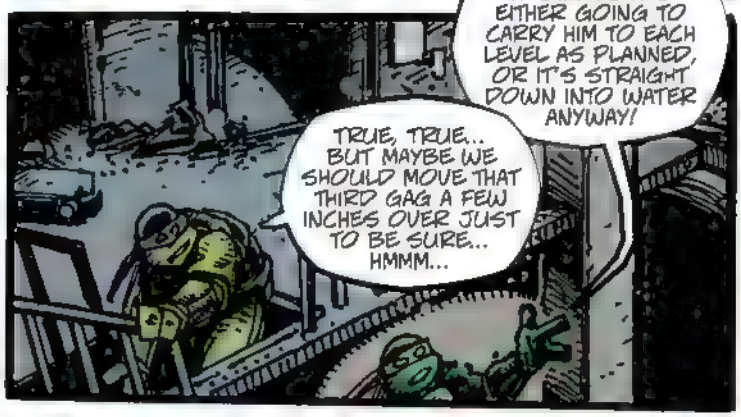
WELL, A GUY HAS TO KEEP A LITTLE MYSTERY ABOUT HIMSELF, RIGHT?
HA, YEAH, SOMETHING LIKE THAT... WHAT POSITION DID YOU PLAY?

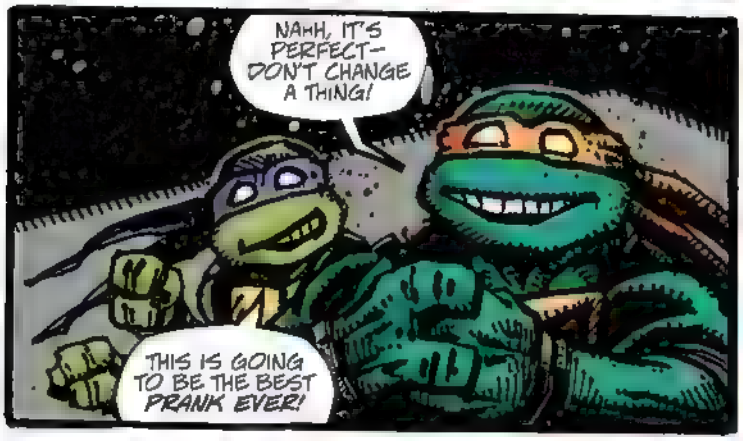

ONLY THE BADDEST POSITION EVER, DEFENSEMAN— CROSS MY BLUE LINE AND PAY THE PRICE!
WOW! SOUNDS AWESOME!

YEAH, FOR A SEMESTER AND A HALF I WAS... WELL, PRETTY GOOD!

I WISH I HAD SEEN YOU IN ACTION. HEY, I WONDER WHAT THE BOYS ARE DOING TONIGHT?

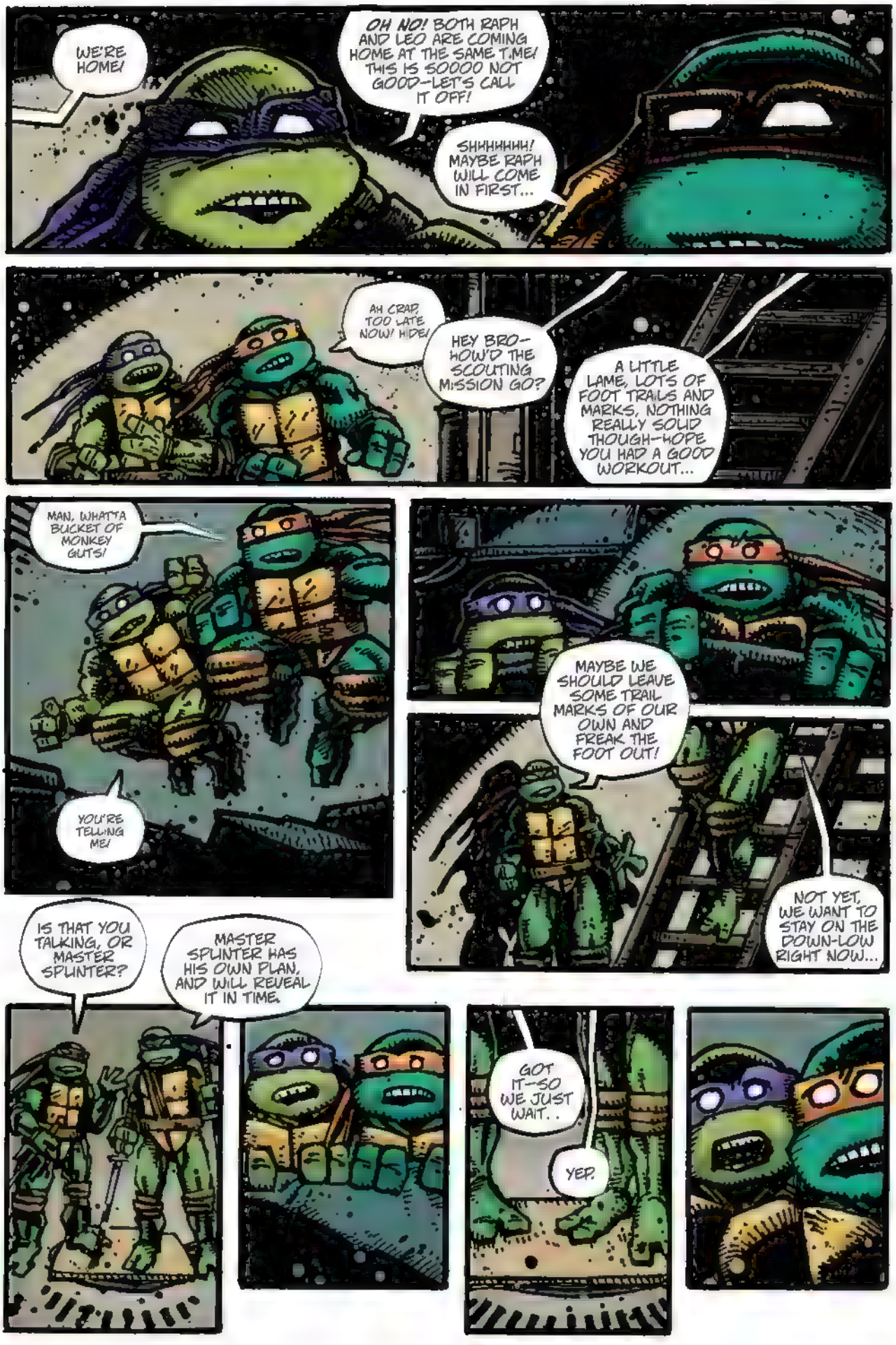
SO I'M A LITTLE WORRIED ABOUT THE WEIGHT DISTRIBUTION, AND SWING ANGLE WHEN HE COMES OFF THE FIRST NET, SO HE CAN HIT THE ROLLER JUST RIGHT...
AH, DON'T WORRY, RAPH BOUNCES PRETTY WELL...


BESIDES, ONCE IT STARTS IT'S EITHER GOING TO CARRY HIM TO EACH LEVEL AS PLANNED, OR IT'S STRAIGHT DOWN INTO WATER ANYWAY!
TRUE, TRUE... BUT MAYBE WE SHOULD MOVE THAT THIRD GAG A FEW INCHES OVER JUST TO BE SURE... HMMM...

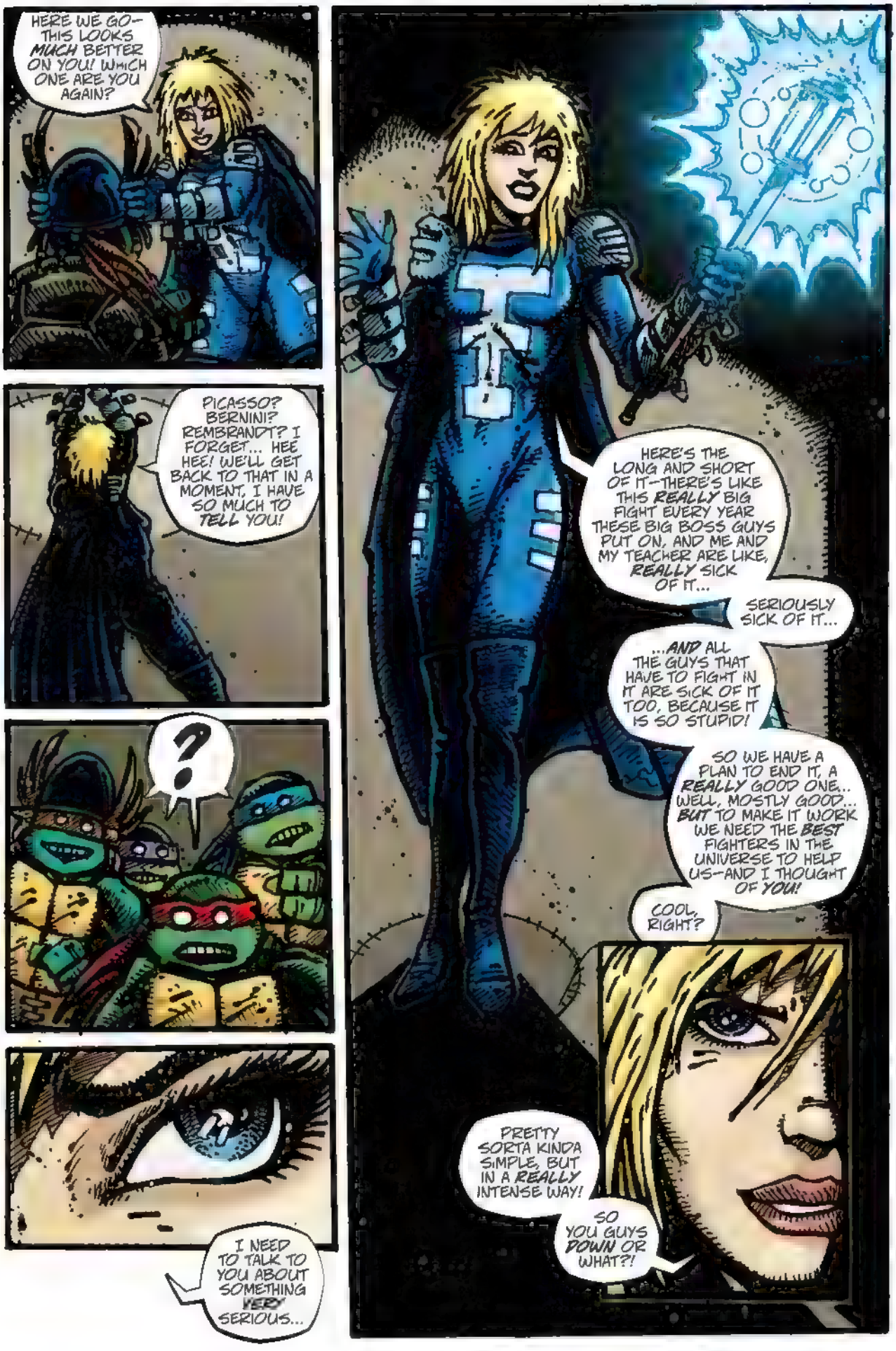

NAHH, IT'S PERFECT— DON'T CHANGE A THING!
THIS IS GOING TO BE THE BEST PRANK EVER!

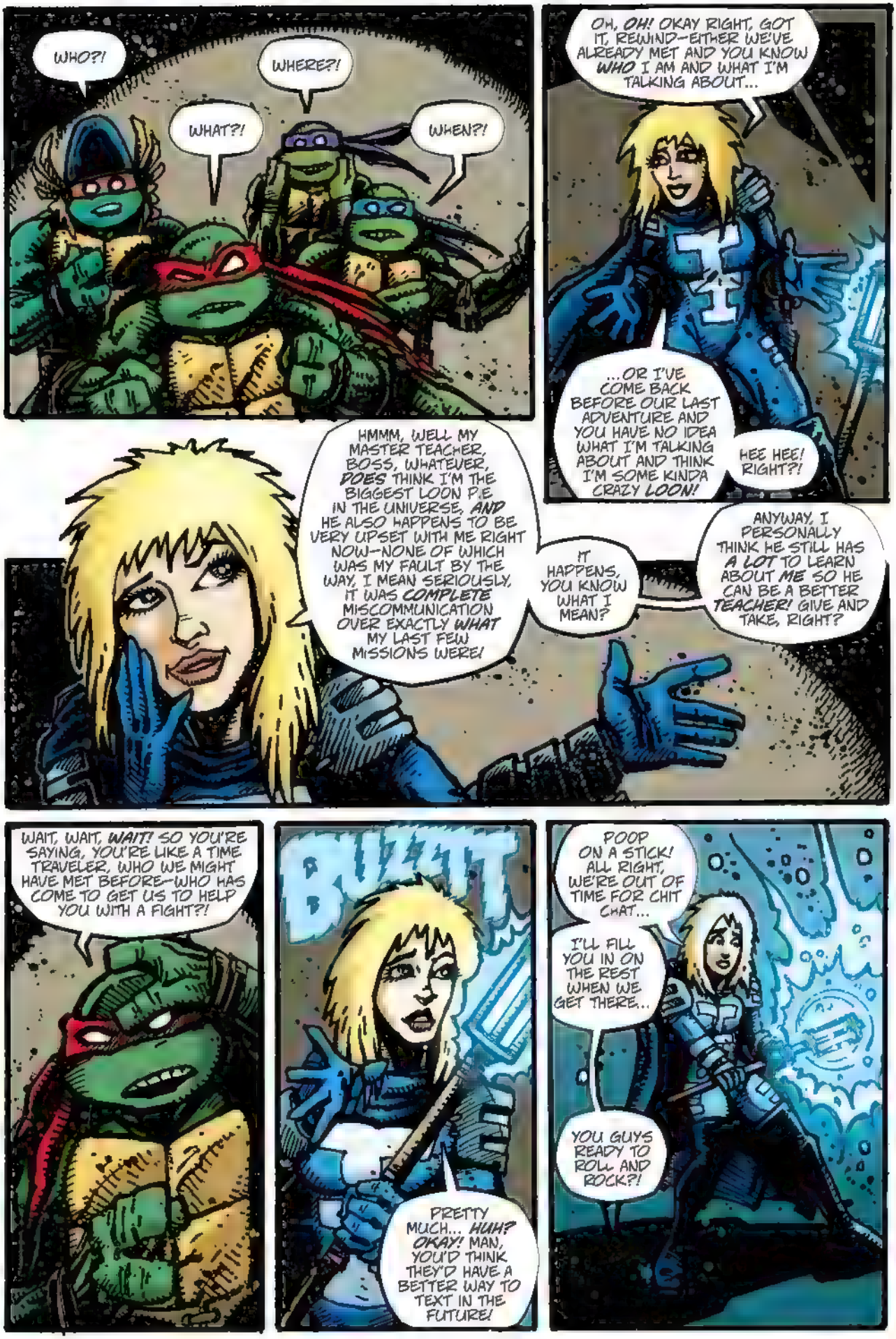
HEH HEH HEH
HMMM. REMEMBER... TO PLAY WITH FIRE IS SIMPLY THE DESIRE TO GET BURNED...

...AND RAPHAEL IS A FLAME THAT ONLY BURNS HOTTER WHEN TEASED.


WE'RE HOME!
OH NO! BOTH RAPH AND LEO ARE COMING HOME AT THE SAME T.ME! THIS IS SOOOO NOT GOOD—LET'S CALL IT OFF!
SHHHHHHH! MAYBE RAPH WILL COME IN FIRST...
AH CRAP, TOO LATE NOW! HIDE!
HEY BRO—HOW'D THE SCOUTING MISSION GO?
A LITTLE LAME, LOTS OF FOOT TRAILS AND MARKS, NOTHING REALLY SOLID THOUGH—HOPE YOU HAD A GOOD WORKOUT...
MAN, WHATTA BUCKET OF MONKEY GUTS!
YOU'RE TELLING ME!
MAYBE WE SHOULD LEAVE SOME TRAIL MARKS OF OUR OWN AND FREAK THE FOOT OUT!
NOT YET, WE WANT TO STAY ON THE DOWN-LOW RIGHT NOW...
IS THAT YOU TALKING, OR MASTER SPLINTER?
MASTER SPLINTER HAS HIS OWN PLAN, AND WILL REVEAL IT IN TIME.
GOT IT—SO WE JUST WAIT..
YEP.

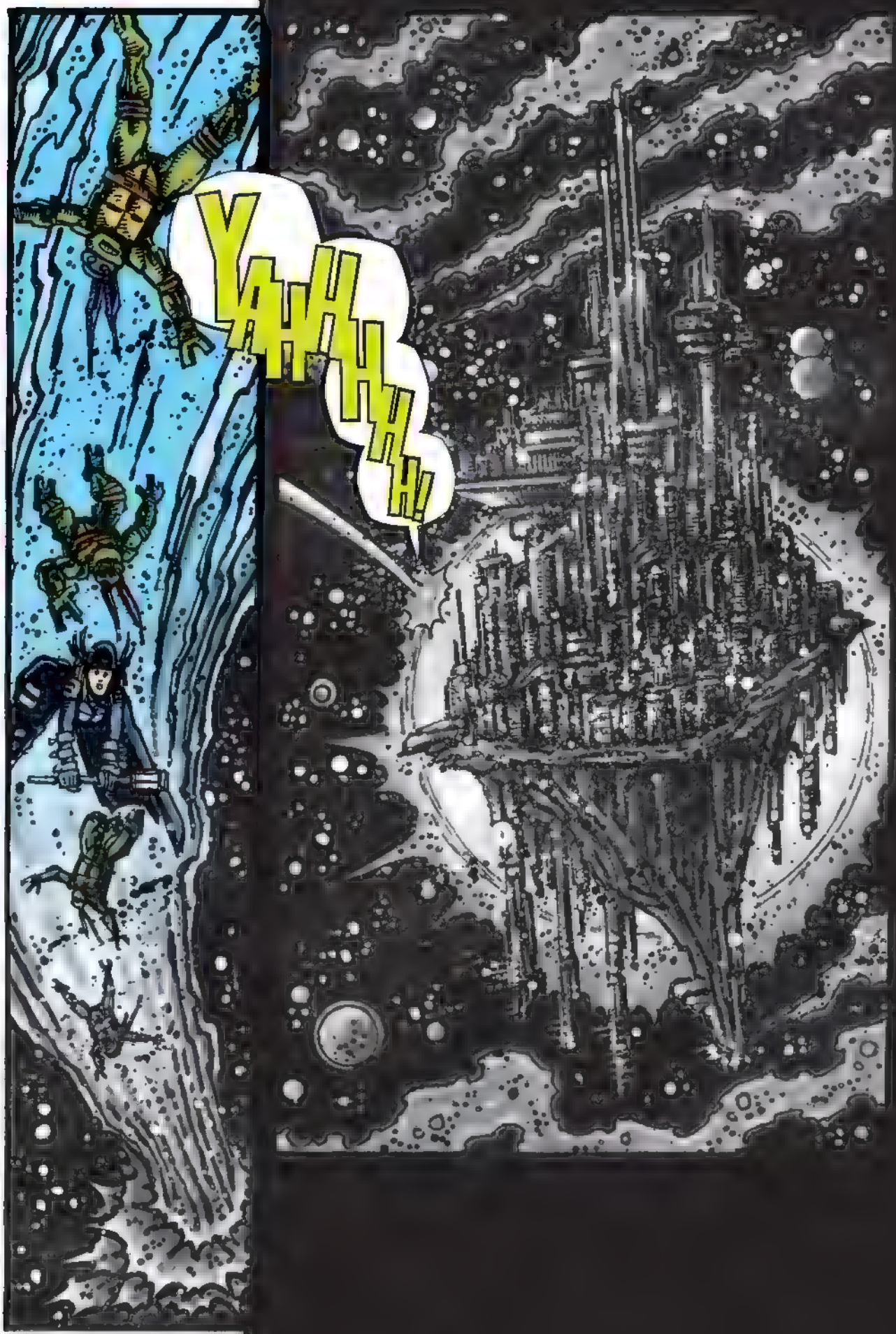
BUZZZZTTTT
THUMP
WHUMP
OW! OW! OW! OW!
CRUSH
GRUMBLE, GRUMBLE. SUCH A BAD IDEA.
TIMES
FRICK'N, FRACK'N, STUPID WORMHOLE! WHAT GENIUS CAME UP WITH THE IDEA THAT THIS IS THE BEST WAY TO TIME TRAVEL?
STUPID HELMET! ANOTHER STROKE OF GENIUS! A THIRD-YEAR APPRENTICE SHOULD GET TO WEAR WHATEVER SHE WANTS!
OHH, HI GUYS!
IT'S ME-RENET! HOW'S IT GOIN?


HERE WE GO— THIS LOOKS MUCH BETTER ON YOU! WHICH ONE ARE YOU AGAIN?
PICASSO? BERNINI? REMBRANDT? I FORGET... HEE HEE! WE'LL GET BACK TO THAT IN A MOMENT. I HAVE SO MUCH TO TELL YOU!
?
I NEED TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT SOMETHING VERY SERIOUS...
HERE'S THE LONG AND SHORT OF IT—THERE'S LIKE THIS REALLY BIG FIGHT EVERY YEAR THESE BIG BOSS GUYS PUT ON, AND ME AND MY TEACHER ARE LIKE, REALLY SICK OF IT...
SERIOUSLY SICK OF IT...
...AND ALL THE GUYS THAT HAVE TO FIGHT IN IT ARE SICK OF IT TOO, BECAUSE IT IS SO STUPID!
SO WE HAVE A PLAN TO END IT, A REALLY GOOD ONE... WELL, MOSTLY GOOD... BUT TO MAKE IT WORK WE NEED THE BEST FIGHTERS IN THE UNIVERSE TO HELP US—AND I THOUGHT OF YOU!
COOL, RIGHT?
PRETTY SORTA KINDA SIMPLE, BUT IN A REALLY INTENSE WAY!
SO YOU GUYS DOWN OR WHAT?!


WHO?!
WHERE?!
WHAT?!
WHEN?!
OH, OH! OKAY RIGHT, GOT IT, REWIND—EITHER WE'VE ALREADY MET AND YOU KNOW WHO I AM AND WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT...
...OR I'VE COME BACK BEFORE OUR LAST ADVENTURE AND YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT AND THINK I'M SOME KINDA CRAZY LOON!
HEE HEE! RIGHT?!
HMMM, WELL MY MASTER TEACHER, BOSS, WHATEVER, DOES THINK I'M THE BIGGEST LOON P.E IN THE UNIVERSE, AND HE ALSO HAPPENS TO BE VERY UPSET WITH ME RIGHT NOW—NONE OF WHICH WAS MY FAULT BY THE WAY, I MEAN SERIOUSLY, IT WAS COMPLETE MISCOMMUNICATION OVER EXACTLY WHAT MY LAST FEW MISSIONS WERE!
IT HAPPENS, YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN?
ANYWAY, I PERSONALLY THINK HE STILL HAS A LOT TO LEARN ABOUT ME SO HE CAN BE A BETTER TEACHER! GIVE AND TAKE, RIGHT?
WAIT, WAIT, WAIT! SO YOU'RE SAYING, YOU'RE LIKE A TIME TRAVELER, WHO WE MIGHT HAVE MET BEFORE—WHO HAS COME TO GET US TO HELP YOU WITH A FIGHT?!
BLITT
PRETTY MUCH... HUH? OKAY! MAN, YOU'D THINK THEY'D HAVE A BETTER WAY TO TEXT IN THE FUTURE!
POOP ON A STICK! ALL RIGHT, WE'RE OUT OF TIME FOR CHIT CHAT...
I'LL FILL YOU IN ON THE REST WHEN WE GET THERE...
YOU GUYS READY TO ROLL AND ROCK?!

I PROMISE I'LL EXPLAIN EVERYTHING ELSE SHORTLY, BUT EVEN IF YOU DON'T REMEMBER ME NOW, TRUST ME, YOU GUYS REALLY LIKED ME BEFORE! WHAT'S IMPORTANT HERE, IS I KNOW WHO YOU ARE..
.. CHAMPIONS THAT FIGHT FOR RIGHT!
THE BALANCE OF LIKE, LOTS OF PEOPLE HANG IN A BALANCE OF A REALLY IMPORTANT BALANCING ACT... THING... AND WILL CONTINUE TO HANG THERE, OR EVEN GO OUT OF BALANCE IF YOU DON'T HELP EVERYTHING GET BALANCED UP! MORE OR LESS...
WAIT—WHAT WAS THE MIDDLE PART AGAIN? I AM SSOOOOOO CONFUSED...
I THINK YOU'RE DONATELLO, RIGHT? AS HANDSOME AS EVER—HERE, HOLD MY SCEPTER A SECOND...
STUPID HELMET—I GOT TEN DEMERITS FOR NOT WEARING IT LAST TRIP! OKAY, GIMME THE SCEPTER BACK.
YOU CAN HAVE IT! THIS THING IS GONNA BLOW!
BUT IT

YOU GUYS DON'T GET SICK DURING TIME TRAVEL, DO YOU?
BZZZT
YAHHHH!!!
WHAT A RACKET! THEY'RE TEARING UP THE PLACE!
I THINK A GOOD TWO-HOUR RUN BACK AND FORTH ACROSS THE EAST VILLAGE SHOULD DO THE TRICK!
FLUSH
-SNIFF SNIFF!-
HAS SOMEONE BURNT ANOTHER BURRITO IN THE MICROWAVE?! BOYS? HELLO? HMMM, MUST HAVE GONE TO WORK OUT ON THEIR OWN... THAT'S INTERESTING...


YAHHHHHH!

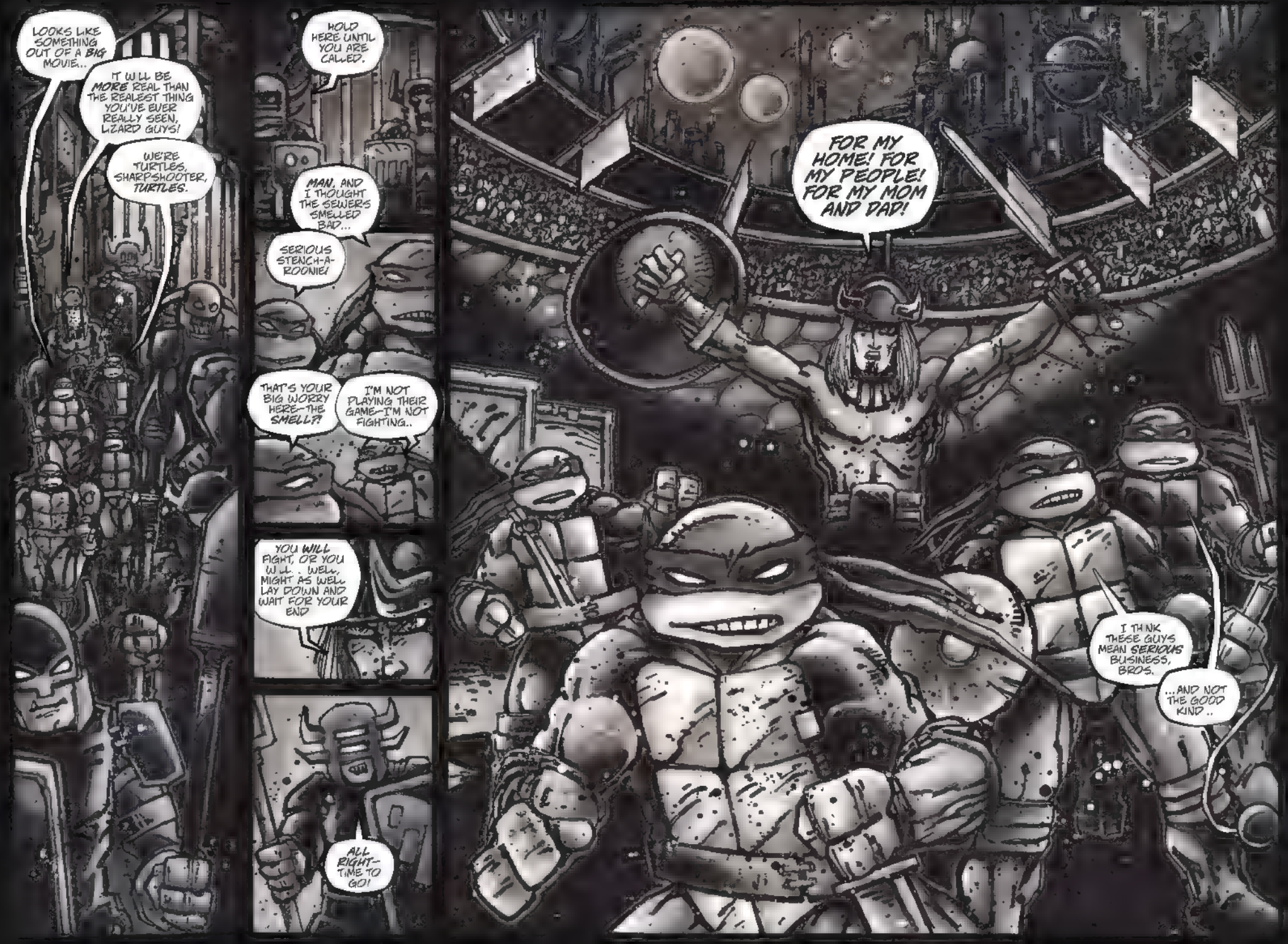
BBUZZTTTT
YAHHHH!
OW! OW! OW! OW!
I'M SERIOUSLY ASKING FOR A RAISE... SOON!
SEE WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT?! ISN'T THIS COMPLETELY WRONG?
STUPID HELMET! STUPID LANDINGS! STUPID JOB—I HAVEN'T HAD A DAY OFF SINCE, SINCE FOREVER...
...AND I MEAN THE REAL FOREVER, NOT JUST THE EVER AND EVER YOU'VE HEARD ABOUT! GRRR!
AH HAH! HERE THEY ARE—LOOK CAPTAIN—THE FRESH MEAT HAS ARRIVED!

RENET! YOU MADE IT WITH ABOUT SIX SECONDS TO SPARE—ALL THE FINAL WARRIORS ARE ALREADY IN THEIR CAGES AND THE FIGHTS HAVE STARTED!
LUCKY FOR YOU, OTHERWISE *YOU'D* HAVE BEEN TOSSED IN WITH THE OTHER COMBAT FODDER THIS TIME!
YOU SMELL LIKE A SEWER! HAH! HAH!
GRRRR... THAT'S OUR HOME YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT...
THESE THUGS SHOULD LAST A FEW MINUTES BEFORE THEY'RE ELIMINATED, MAYBE. WE'LL THROW THEM IN WITH YOUR FRIEND *BALTIZAR*. RENET, YOU CAN JOIN THE OTHERS IN THE STANDS!
DON'T WORRY, GUYS, I'LL HANDLE THINGS ON MY END, YOU DO YOUR PART, AND IN THE END, I'LL MAKE US ALL A *BIG* CAKE!
CAKE?! I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'VE GOTTEN US INTO, LADY, BUT WE'RE GOING TO HAVE A *VERY* SERIOUS TALK WHEN THIS IS OVER!
HOLY MOLEY! THIS IS LIKE THE SUPER BOWL!
WITHOUT THE PAYCHECK...
OR A TRIP TO DISNEY-LAND IF WE WIN...
MY FAVORITE IS CHOCOLATE...
IS SHE STILL TALKING ABOUT CAKE?

DON'T WORRY, GUYS, I CAN MAKE VANILLA TOO! BE STRONG, YOU'LL KNOW WHAT TO DO WHEN THE TIME COMES! I SAW IT IN A DREAM!
GET THEM TO THEIR CAGE—ONLY THE VERY BEST LODGINGS FOR YOUR LAST NIGHT IN THIS UNIVERSE!
OR ANY FOR THAT MATTER...
LEFT. RIGHT.
LEFT. RIGHT.
LEFT. RIGHT.
HERE WE GO... GET INSIDE!
CALL THE FRONT DESK IF YOU NEED ANYTHING! HAH!
HERE'S YOUR NEW ROOMMATE!
WHO'S THIS GUY?

IN THE DARK OF ALL DARKEST DARK NIGHTS, IN THE MIDDLE OF A MOSTLY DARK DAY... WHAT MADNESS STANDS BEFORE ME NOW?! MY ONLY RULE IS BALTIZAR FIGHTS ALONE!
FROM THE LOOKS OF YOU LIZARDS, I WILL BE ANYWAY. STAY OUT OF MY WAY AND YOU MIGHT SURVIVE THE FIRST MATCH!
IF NOT, I KNOW WHAT IS COMING, AND IF YOU'RE LUCKY—YOUR END WILL BE QUICK! I'LL SHOW YOU WHERE THE WEAPONS ARE—IF YOU KNOW HOW TO USE ONE...
JUST DON'T LOOK FOR A HELMET LIKE MINE, THIS WAS SPECIALLY MADE FOR ME BY MY AUNT'S COUSIN'S FRIEND, AND ONLY LOOKS GOOD ON SOMEONE AS HANDSOME AS I AM!
I'M SURE YOU'RE CLUELESS, SO HERE'S THE SITUATION. HERE IN THIS PLACE, WE ARE JUST PUPPETS FOR THEIR AMUSEMENT... BUT NO ONE ELSE HERE IS LAUGHING...
THEY ARE AGELESS—I'M TALKING ABOUT THE DIMENSIONAL COUNCIL, AND THEY PUT ON THESE GAMES. EVERY TWELVE CYCLES THEY GATHER THE BEST OF THE BEST FROM ALL THE REALMS AND FORCE US TO FIGHT EACH OTHER IN THE ARENA. MY PEOPLE ARE ALWAYS CHOSEN AS WARRIORS, BECAUSE WE'RE THE BEST.
THE WINNERS OF EACH MATCH GET TO FIGHT ANOTHER MATCH, BUT THE LOSERS GET BEAMED AWAY... BANISHED TO A HELLISH SLAVE-CAMP UNTIL THE END OF THEIR DAYS.

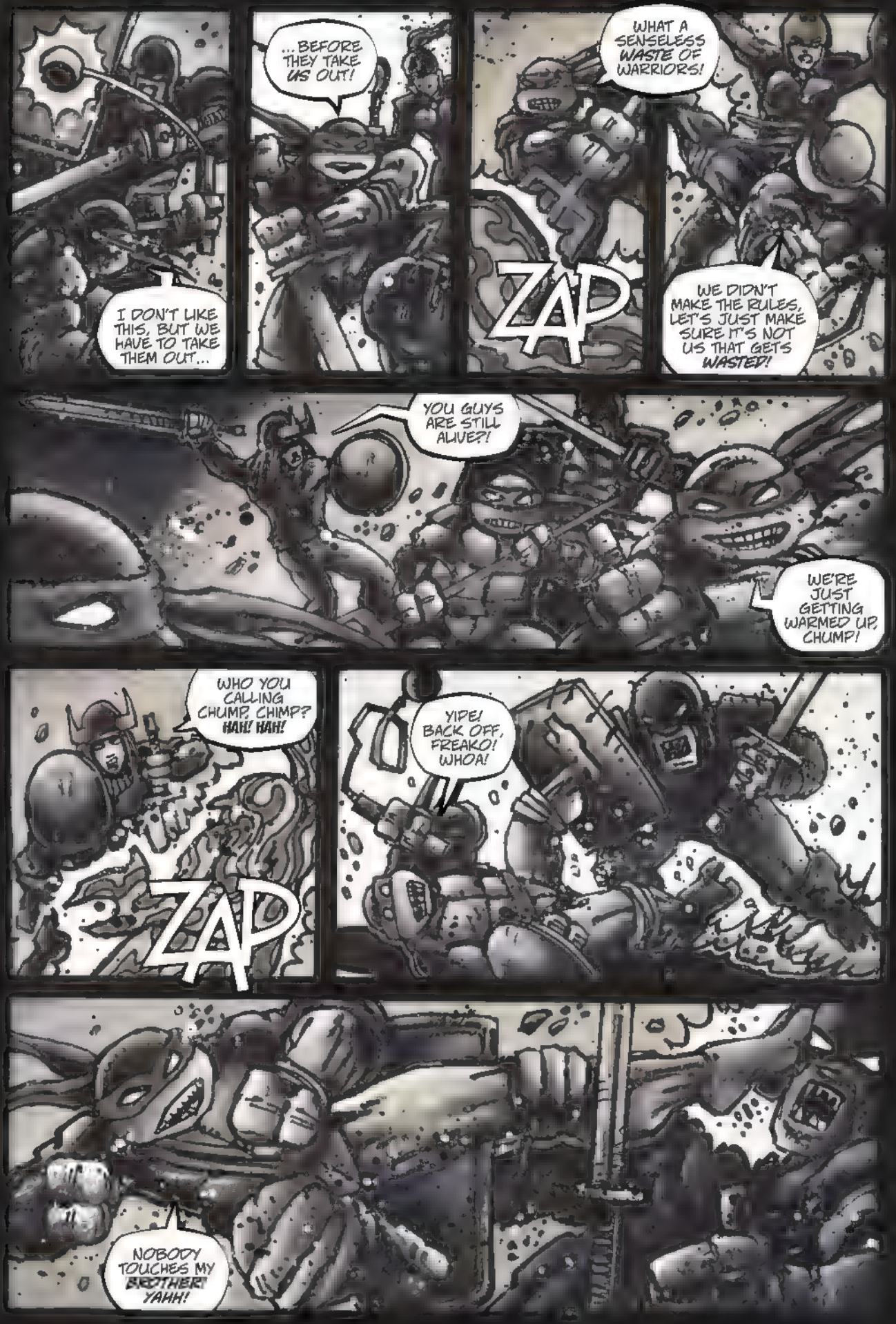
FIRST OFF-WE'RE TURTLES, PRETTY BOY.
WAIT, WHAT KIND OF COUNCIL DOES THIS?
I'M NOT BUYING ANY OF THIS.
WHERE CAN I GET A HELMET LIKE YOURS?
I ALREADY TOLD YOU NO ON THE HELMET! GEEZ!
HERE, CHOOSE YOUR ARENA WEAPONS QUICKLY! THESE WILL ONLY WORK IN THE ARENA. THEY CAN CAUSE DAMAGE TO ANOTHER WARRIOR LIKE ANY OTHER FIGHT, BUT IF IT IS A "DEATH STRIKE" THE COMBATANT IS BEAMED AWAY IMMEDIATELY.
ONCE SENT AWAY, NO ONE HAS BEEN HEARD FROM AGAIN. THE FINAL WINNER IS SUPPOSEDLY BEAMED TO A PARADISE.. BUT NO ONE HAS PROOF OF THAT EITHER. WE THINK IT'S LIES... ALL PLAYERS BECOME SLAVES!
TOTALLY. SOUNDS LIKE A LOAD OF BULL TO ME!
DITTO...
ALL READY, MEAT?!
YOU'RE UP NEXT, LET'S GO!
FOR THOSE ABOUT TO DIE... IT'S TIME!
LET'S GO, LADIES!


LOOKS LIKE SOMETHING OUT OF A BIG MOVIE...
IT WILL BE MORE REAL THAN THE REALEST THING YOU'VE EVER REALLY SEEN, LIZARD GUYS!
WE'RE TURTLES, SHARPSHOOTER, TURTLES.
HOLD HERE UNTIL YOU ARE CALLED.
MAN, AND I THOUGHT THE SEWERS SMELLED BAD...
SERIOUS STENCH-A-ROONIE!
THAT'S YOUR BIG WORRY HERE—THE SMELL?!
I'M NOT PLAYING THEIR GAME—I'M NOT FIGHTING..
YOU WILL FIGHT, OR YOU WILL... WELL, MIGHT AS WELL LAY DOWN AND WAIT FOR YOUR END
ALL RIGHT—TIME TO GO!
FOR MY HOME! FOR MY PEOPLE! FOR MY MOM AND DAD!
I THINK THESE GUYS MEAN SERIOUS BUSINESS, BROS.
...AND NOT THE GOOD KIND ..

I STILL DON'T GET THIS! WHO OR WHAT CONTROLS THIS FIGHT, AND IF WE LOSE, THEY SEND US WHERE?! I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHERE HERE IS?!
WHAT ARE WE FIGHTING FOR?!
I HAVE TOLD YOU ALL I KNOW... IF FOR NOTHING ELSE, FIGHT FOR YOUR OTHER LIZARD BROTHERS.
WELCOME TO THE NEXT ROUND OF TODAYS FESTIVITIES! THE DIMENSIONAL COUNCIL HOPES YOU ENJOY THE FINAL BOUT BEFORE INTERMISSION! LIVE LONG AND PROSPER!
RUN, HIDE, AND WAIT, WARRIORS—I'LL PROTECT YOU AS LONG AS I CAN!
NOT LIKELY, SPORT!
OH, THAT BALTIZAR IS SOOOOO HANDSOME!
BACK OFF, GIRL—HE'S MINE!
HI, BALTIZAR! KICK SOME BUTT! HI, TURTLES! REMEMBER WHAT I TOLD YOU—SHOW THEM WHAT YOU'RE MADE OF!
AND DON'T FORGET OUR SECRET PLAN! WHOOPS! SHH! SHH! I DIDN'T JUST SAY THAT...

...AND FOR RENET!
GAH—FOR THE LOVE OF PETE!
FOR SPLINTER!
FOR EARTH!
HMPF. THIS IS SO STUPID.
OH, BALT!
GRRR!
RAH!
SNORT!
KAH-CHACK
RAHHH!
YAHHH!

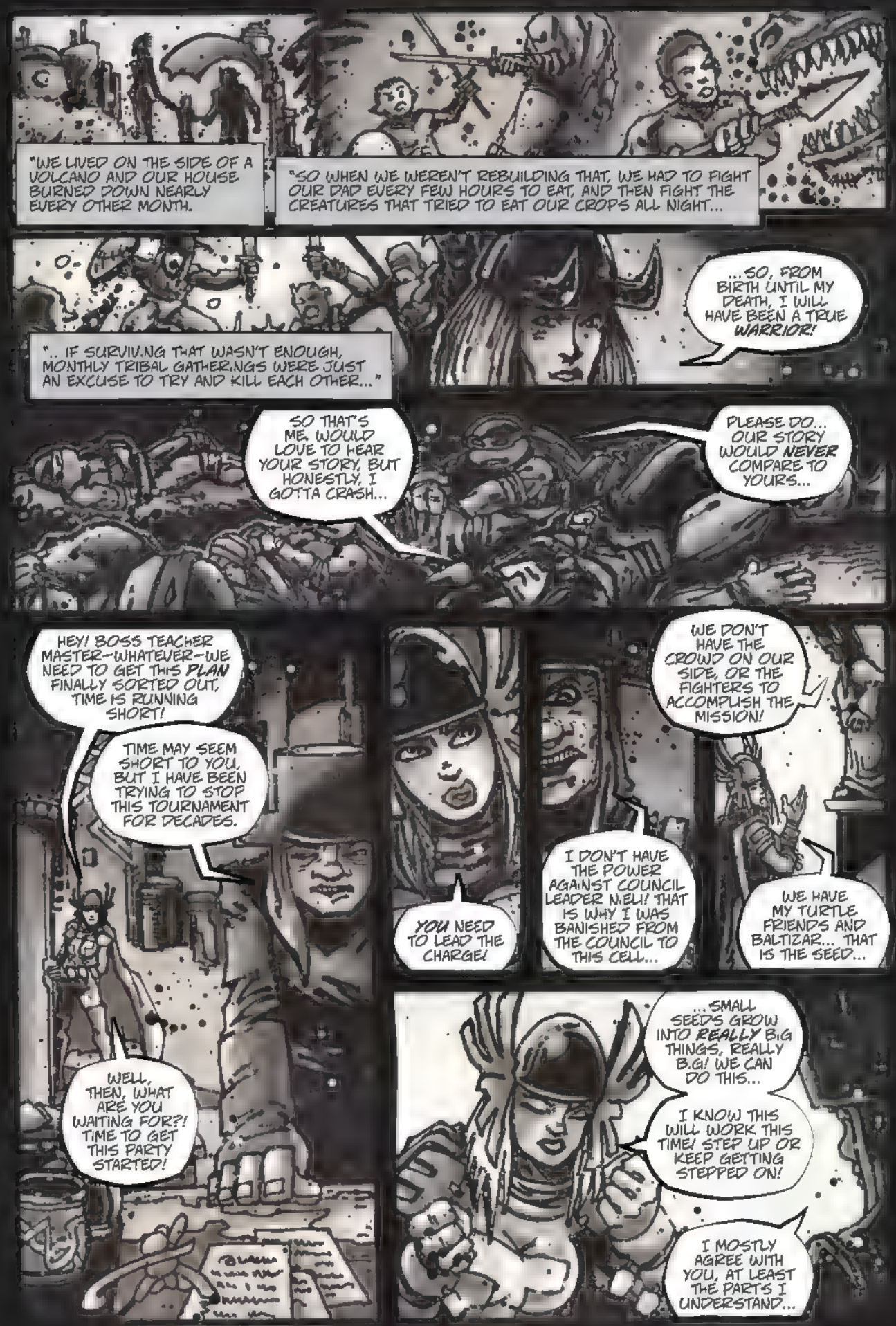
HOLD BACK, LIZARDS—MY MIGHTY SWORD STAB SLASHER WILL DRINK FIRST AND DEEP! COWABUNGA!
HAVE AT THEE, POINTY-HEADED SCUM!
YOU HESITATE? FINE—I'LL COME TO YOU!
HOW'S THIS FOR SKILL, FISH FACE! HAH! HAH! HAH!
LEAVING SO SOON?
ZAP
THIS IS HOW IT WORKS, LIZARD FROG GREEN GUYS—JOIN THE FIGHT OR I WON'T SEE YOU WITH MY EYES ANYMORE—BECAUSE YOU'LL BE ALL GONE!
WHOA! DID HE REALLY SAY COWABUNGA?
WHAT AN OVERCONFIDENT IDIOT!
TIME TO SHOW THESE GOOFBALLS HOW NINJA TURTLES FIGHT, BEFORE THE MIGHTY BALTIZAR RUNS OUT OF DUMB LUCK!

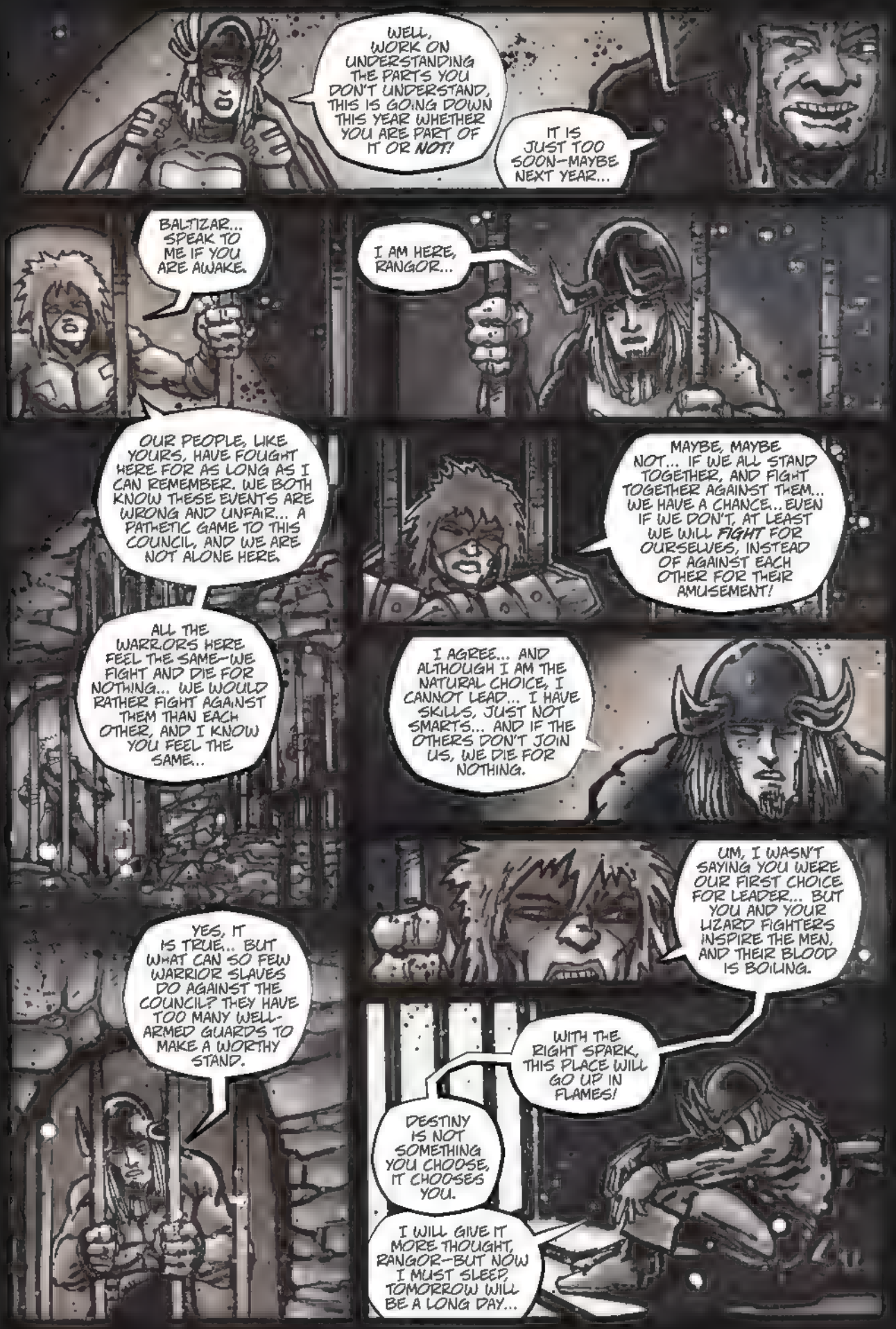

I DON'T LIKE THIS, BUT WE HAVE TO TAKE THEM OUT...
...BEFORE THEY TAKE US OUT!
WHAT A SENSELESS WASTE OF WARRIORS!
ZAP
WE DIDN'T MAKE THE RULES, LET'S JUST MAKE SURE IT'S NOT US THAT GETS WASTED!
YOU GUYS ARE STILL ALIVE?!
WE'RE JUST GETTING WARMED UP, CHUMP!
WHO YOU CALLING CHUMP, CHIMP? HAH! HAH!
ZAP
YIPE! BACK OFF, FREAKO! WHOA!
NOBODY TOUCHES MY BROTHER! YAHH!

THIS FIGHT HAS LEFT ME NO CHOICE..
...SO I CHOOSE TO PROTECT MY BROTHERS!
ZAP
ZAP
I DIDN'T NEED HELP, LEO, BUT THANKS—AND YOU'RE WELCOME!
STAND BACK, BLONDIE—I GOT THIS!
STAND BACK YOURSELF, GREENIE—YOU'RE JUST IN MY WAY!
SEE?! I GOT THE BEAST FIRST!
ZAP
IN YOUR DREAMS, HORN HEAD—I STRUCK FIRST!
WE'LL CALL IT EVEN... I THINK WITH A FEW YEARS OF TRAINING ON MY WORLD YOU COULD BE PRETTY GOOD AT THIS!
I THINK WITH A FEW YEARS TRAINING, YOU WOULD UNDERSTAND BASIC MATH! HOW ABOUT I GIVE YOU A PRIVATE FIGHTING LESSON WHEN THIS IS OVER, LONGSHANKS?!
TAKE IT DOWN, RAPH—WE WON, LETS GO HOME!

OKAY, WE'VE ONLY BEEN HERE FOR LIKE THREE HOURS, AND WE'VE BEEN FIGHTING FOR MOST OF IT! I'M OVER THIS!
I'M STILL NOT COMPLETELY SURE WHAT IS GOING ON HERE... YOU GUYS?
OLD SCHOOL ROMAN GLADIATOR STUFF—LIKE BALTIZAR SAID, WE'RE AMUSEMENT FOR THIS CRAZY COUNCIL AND THE ALIEN CROWD!
I DON'T SEE WHAT WE'RE SUPPOSED TO ACCOMPLISH... WHERE IS THAT RENET CHICK AND HER STICK?! TIME TO LEAVE!
NO ONE LEAVES HERE UNTIL THE GAMES ARE OVER. I DON'T KNOW WHY RENET BROUGHT YOU HERE—ALL I KNOW IS WE SURVIVED TODAY, SO WE FIGHT AGAIN TOMORROW...
YAHH! YOU'RE ALL STILL ALIVE! MY PLAN IS WORKING PERFECTLY! HURRAY!
BY SPECIAL ORDER OF THE GLORIOUS DIMENSIONAL COUNCIL, TOMORROW'S MATCH WILL BE A TRIPLE THREAT—THREE COMBATANTS TO EACH OF THEIR ONE!
I'M TAKING THAT COUNCIL DOWN, A LIMB AT A TIME!
SAVE YOUR ANGER, LIZARD, YOU'LL NEED IT IN THE MORNING.
I'VE HEARD YOU NEVER REALLY KNOW SOMEONE UNTIL YOU FIGHT THEM. OR WITH THEM. OR WITH SOMEONE WHO HAS FOUGHT WITH OR AGAINST THEM. BUT YOU ARE WARRIORS, NEARLY WORTHY OF MY RESPECT.
WHAT? HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU BEEN HIT IN THE HEAD?
ALL RIGHT, YOU LUCKY BEASTS—BACK TO YOUR CAGES, AND WE'LL SEE IF YOU SURVIVE TOMORROW! HAH! HAH! HAH!
LEFT RIGHT LEFT RIGHT... WAIT, RIGHT LEFT RIGHT LEFT... HURRY UP!
DUDES, I HOPE THEY HAVE GUARDS TO GUARD THESE GUARDS, OR WE SHOULD JUST KEEP WALKING AND SEE IF THEY NOTICE...

THIS REALLY IS INSANE, BALTIZAR. WE'VE BEEN BROUGHT HERE AGAINST OUR WILL, AND ONLY WANT TO RETURN HOME!
LIKE THE REST OF US, WE ARE ALL HERE AGAINST OUR WILL...
...AS I TOLD YOU WHEN YOU FIRST ARRIVED... YOU FIGHT OR FIGHT... OR GET SENT AWAY... MOST LIKELY DIE... THERE IS NOTHING ELSE.
IF EVERYONE HERE FEELS THE SAME, WE SHOULD ALL JOIN TOGETHER AND STOP THEM FROM DOING THIS ANYMORE...
WHY DON'T YOU FIGHT BACK?
YOU'RE NOT THE FIRST WITH THIS IDEA, OR EVEN THE SECOND OR THIRD--YOU'RE LIKE, WAY DOWN THE LINE...
IT WOULD TAKE A MIGHTY WIND TO BLOW THIS IN THE OTHER DIRECTION... TOO MANY DIFFERENT KINDS OF CREATURES HERE, TOO MANY DIFFERENCES.
WHAT WOULD IT TAKE TO CONVINCE THE FEW HUNDRED WARRIORS IN THE CAGES AROUND US TO JOIN A FIGHT?
MAYBE WE COULD MAKE SOME GIANT ROBOTS OR SOMETHING... HEY, ANY MORE LIZARDS ON YOUR PLANET? THAT WOULD BE SO COOL, AND A BIG HELP!
UMM, NOPE... ONLY THE FOUR OF US, AND OUR DAD.
HEY, WHERE DID YOU LEARN TO... UM... FIGHT?


"WE LIVED ON THE SIDE OF A VOLCANO AND OUR HOUSE BURNED DOWN NEARLY EVERY OTHER MONTH.
"SO WHEN WE WEREN'T REBUILDING THAT, WE HAD TO FIGHT OUR DAD EVERY FEW HOURS TO EAT, AND THEN FIGHT THE CREATURES THAT TRIED TO EAT OUR CROPS ALL NIGHT...
"... IF SURVIVING THAT WASN'T ENOUGH, MONTHLY TRIBAL GATHERINGS WERE JUST AN EXCUSE TO TRY AND KILL EACH OTHER..."
...SO, FROM BIRTH UNTIL MY DEATH, I WILL HAVE BEEN A TRUE *WARRIOR!*
SO THAT'S ME. WOULD LOVE TO HEAR YOUR STORY, BUT HONESTLY, I GOTTA CRASH...
PLEASE DO... OUR STORY WOULD *NEVER* COMPARE TO YOURS...
HEY! BOSS TEACHER MASTER-WHATEVER-WE NEED TO GET THIS *PLAN* FINALLY SORTED OUT, TIME IS RUNNING SHORT!
TIME MAY SEEM SHORT TO YOU, BUT I HAVE BEEN TRYING TO STOP THIS TOURNAMENT FOR DECADES.
WELL, THEN, WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?! TIME TO GET THIS PARTY STARTED!
YOU NEED TO LEAD THE CHARGE!
I DON'T HAVE THE POWER AGAINST COUNCIL LEADER NIEL! THAT IS WHY I WAS BANISHED FROM THE COUNCIL TO THIS CELL...
WE DON'T HAVE THE CROWD ON OUR SIDE, OR THE FIGHTERS TO ACCOMPLISH THE MISSION!
WE HAVE MY TURTLE FRIENDS AND BALTIZAR... THAT IS THE SEED...
...SMALL SEEDS GROW INTO *REALLY* BIG THINGS, REALLY B.G! WE CAN DO THIS...
I KNOW THIS WILL WORK THIS TIME! STEP UP OR KEEP GETTING STEPPED ON!
I MOSTLY AGREE WITH YOU, AT LEAST THE PARTS I UNDERSTAND...


WELL, WORK ON UNDERSTANDING THE PARTS YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND, THIS IS GOING DOWN THIS YEAR WHETHER YOU ARE PART OF IT OR NOT!
IT IS JUST TOO SOON—MAYBE NEXT YEAR...
BALTIZAR... SPEAK TO ME IF YOU ARE AWAKE.
I AM HERE, RANGOR...
OUR PEOPLE, LIKE YOURS, HAVE FOUGHT HERE FOR AS LONG AS I CAN REMEMBER. WE BOTH KNOW THESE EVENTS ARE WRONG AND UNFAIR... A PATHETIC GAME TO THIS COUNCIL, AND WE ARE NOT ALONE HERE.
MAYBE, MAYBE NOT... IF WE ALL STAND TOGETHER, AND FIGHT TOGETHER AGAINST THEM... WE HAVE A CHANCE.. EVEN IF WE DON'T, AT LEAST WE WILL FIGHT FOR OURSELVES, INSTEAD OF AGAINST EACH OTHER FOR THEIR AMUSEMENT!
ALL THE WARRIORS HERE FEEL THE SAME—WE FIGHT AND DIE FOR NOTHING... WE WOULD RATHER FIGHT AGAINST THEM THAN EACH OTHER, AND I KNOW YOU FEEL THE SAME..
I AGREE... AND ALTHOUGH I AM THE NATURAL CHOICE, I CANNOT LEAD... I HAVE SKILLS, JUST NOT SMARTS... AND IF THE OTHERS DON'T JOIN US, WE DIE FOR NOTHING.
UM, I WASN'T SAYING YOU WERE OUR FIRST CHOICE FOR LEADER... BUT YOU AND YOUR LIZARD FIGHTERS INSPIRE THE MEN, AND THEIR BLOOD IS BOILING.
YES, IT IS TRUE.. BUT WHAT CAN SO FEW WARRIOR SLAVES DO AGAINST THE COUNCIL? THEY HAVE TOO MANY WELL-ARMED GUARDS TO MAKE A WORTHY STAND.
WITH THE RIGHT SPARK, THIS PLACE WILL GO UP IN FLAMES!
DESTINY IS NOT SOMETHING YOU CHOOSE, IT CHOOSES YOU.
I WILL GIVE IT MORE THOUGHT, RANGOR—BUT NOW I MUST SLEEP, TOMORROW WILL BE A LONG DAY...

AHHHH!
KA-ZAT
HAH! HAH! HAH!
TAKE THIS!
ARGH...
BACK OFF, JERK FACE, OR I'LL REMOVE IT!
NAH! BALTIZAR CAN BARELY LIFT HIS WEAPONS NOW... AND WILL BE TAKEN OUT IN THE FIRST FEW MINUTES OF A MATCH YOU'RE ALL SURE TO LOSE!
SUIT UP, "WARRIORS"—YOU HAVE ONE MINUTE TO GET BATTLE-READY!
CAN'T WIN FAIR AND SQUARE SO YOU HAVE TO CHEAT, HUH?!
SCUMBAG! WE'LL SHOW THEM WE DON'T GO DOWN THAT EASY.
HOW ARE YOU DOING, BALT?
I'LL... I'LL BE FINE... I CAN FIGHT.
DUDE, YOU CAN BARELY STAND...
KEEP IT MOVING, LOSERS, LET'S GET THIS OVER WITH!
FORM A CIRCLE, LET THEM COME TO US, AND LET'S KEEP OUR FRIEND SAFE.
NEXT SPEECH, TRY TO INCLUDE THINGS WE DON'T ALREADY KNOW!
CAN IT AND FOCUS, RAPH!
MY HELMET IS SO COOL...

I CAN. FIGHT.. -:GROAN:-
HOLD YOUR OWN WHEREVER YOU CAN, BALT, WE'RE GOING TO KEEP THEM AWAY FROM YOU FOR NOW AND KICK ASS AT THE SAME TIME.
RAPH--HOLD YOUR POSITION, AND WAIT FOR MY INSTRUCTIONS-- WE'RE DOING THIS OLD SCHOOL, LIKE MASTER TAUGHT US!
CRUSH 'EM ALL!
PUNY, WEAK LIZARDS! HA!
I'M HUNGRY FOR FRESH MEAT!
DON, GO STRAIGHT UP THE MIDDLE, RAPH AND I WILL NAIL THE FLANKS! MIKE, DEAL WITH ANYONE THAT HEADS FOR BALTIZAR!
I'M.. I'M READY STARTING TO GET SOME FEELING BACK... THE SHOCK IS WEARING OFF.

BROTHERS IN ARMS! HOW MUCH LONGER ARE WE GOING TO TAKE THIS?! YOU SAW WHAT THEY DID TO BALTIZAR IN HIS CELL—YOU SEE HOW THE DIMENSIONAL COUNCIL CHEATS—YOU SEE HOW THE LIZARD MEN FIGHT TO PROTECT A WARRIOR THEY OWE NOTHING TO!
TEAR DOWN YOUR CAGES! IF WE ALL JOIN TOGETHER, WE CAN DEFEAT THE GUARDS AS WELL! TODAY WE TAKE BACK OUR FREEDOM!
STRIKE AND MOVE, STRIKE AND MOVE—WATCH IT, THEY'RE BREAKING THROUGH!
BEHIND YOU!
WE'RE ALL OVER IT, THERE'S JUST TOO MANY!
WE'VE FOUGHT MORE FOOT THAN THIS BY ACCIDENT!
TURTLE UP!
ZAP
ONE DOWN!
FOURTEEN TO GO!

INCOMING! GOT IT COVERED!
BREAK LEFT... HERE COMES THE HAMMER!
ZAP
THAT'S SLEDGEHAMMER IF YOU DON'T MIND...
BRING IT BACK IN, GUYS, KEEP THE CIRCLE TIGHT!
ZAP
WHAT?!
I HAVE YOUR BACK, BROTHER, NOW WATCH MINE!
COME ON! I WON'T STAND FOR THIS! SEND IN MORE WARRIORS—I WANT THESE GUYS TAKEN OUT NO MATTER WHAT THE COST!
SO COMMANDS COUNCILMAN NIEL!!

I FIGHT FOR MY LIZARD BROTHERS, MY WARRIOR BROTHERS STILL STUCK IN THEIR CELLS—AND FOR MY SOON-TO-BE GIRLFRIEND, RENET!
BOOYAKASHA!

EASY— WATCH YOUR RIGHT!
...AND YOU WATCH YOUR LEFT! HAH! YOU READY TO TAKE THIS GUY?
ONLY ONE WAY TO FIND OUT!
HI—YAH!
HI—LOW!
ZAP
BOO, DIMENSIONAL COUNCIL!
YEAH, BALTIZAR! LIZARDS!
BALTIZAR! LIZARDS! WE WANT A FAIR MATCH!
I DO NOT CARE WHAT IT TAKES! I WANT EVERY GUARD IN THE CITY IN THERE. END THIS MATCH NOW!
WHY ARE YOU STILL STANDING THERE?!
I DON'T CARE IF YOU NEED TO ARM YOUR KIDS AND PETS!
DESTROY THEM!
BUT, SIR... THAT'S NOT FAIR...

YEAH, IT'S TOTALLY UNFAIR! YOU'RE ALL GREAT WARRIORS, THE BEST, AND THE COUNCIL WASTES YOU WITH THEIR STUPID GAMES! WHY OBEY THEIR ORDERS? WHY NOT LAY DOWN YOUR ARMS AND HAVE AN AWESOME PICNIC AND EAT TOO MUCH AND HANG OUT? COME ON!
HOLY... WHAT THE HELL IS THAT?!
A TRICERATON... FIERCE WARRIORS, I'VE NEVER SEEN ONE BEATEN...
YOU GO FIRST—WE'LL BACK YOU UP!
RAHHH! COME ON, BROTHER WARRIORS!
KA-SHICK
STOP! STOP OR... AHHH!
TOO LATE! YOUR TYRANNY ENDS NOW!
TAKE ALL THE GUARDS' WEAPONS AND KEYS, FREE EVERYONE—TODAY EVERYONE FIGHTS FOR FREEDOM!
WHOAH! THIS GUY IS HUGE!
KA-THOOM
GAHH!
THE BIGGER THEY ARE—THE MORE THEY HURT!

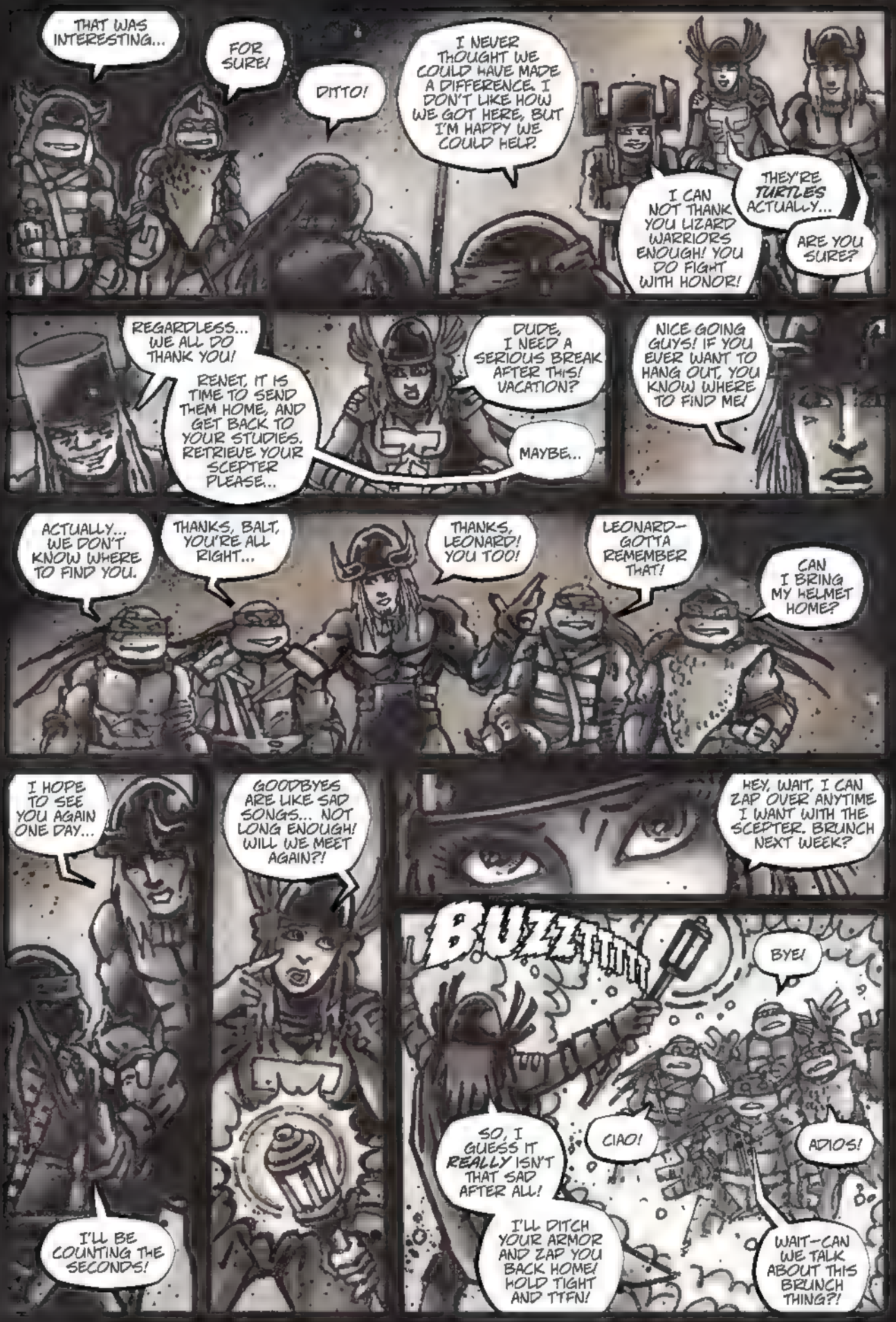
I'M NOT GOING TO STAND AROUND ANY MORE—I WANT TO FIGHT FOR RIGHT WITH MY FRIENDS!
ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS, DIMENSIONAL COUNCIL! TODAY WE TAKE A STAND TO END YOUR STUPID GAMES!
YAHH! HIS ARM IS AS BIG AS ME!
STRIKE AND RUN! STRIKE AND RUN!
RENET! NO! STOP!
RAHH! ZOG DESTROY!
I'LL KEEP HIM FOCUSED ON ME...
...AND WE'LL KEEP HITTING HIM FROM ALL SIDES!
I'M COMING! HOLD ON!
RENET! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
I GOT THIS! BACK OFF AND JOIN OUR SIDE, WARRIOR!
YOU'RE CRAZY!
CRAZY FOR YOU! LET'S END THIS FIGHT—TOGETHER!

FORWARD! FORWARD! FREE EVERYONE!
WHOA! I DON'T KNOW, GUYS, THIS ONE'S A BRUTE!
WE HAVE TO TIRE HIM OUT— KEEP CIRCLING HIM, STRIKE WHEN YOU CAN AND KEEP YOUR DISTANCE...
MAYBE IF HE GOES TO SLEEP WE'LL HAVE A CHANCE!
YAHH!
ZAP
YAHH!
NO! NO! NO! NO! WHERE ARE MY GUARDS?! STOP THEM, DESTROY THEM ALL, NOW! GAHHH!
BOO!
DOWN WITH THE COUNCIL!
STOP THE MATCH! THE FIGHTS MUST BE FAIR!
OH MY... THIS HAS GONE ON LONG ENOUGH!
YAHHHH! TO THE ARENA!
REVOLT! YAHHHH!

THAT IS THE LAST OF THEM—OPEN THE GATES!
GAHH! I'M COMING DOWN THERE MYSELF—THIS WILL END ONE WAY OR ANOTHER! GAHH!
I AGREE WITH COUNCIL MEMBER GAUGE! I, COUNCIL MEMBER SIMULTANEOUS, HAVE TRIED TO STOP THESE HORRIBLE GAMES FOR A LONG TIME, I KNOW MOST OF YOU DON'T LIKE THEM—COUNCIL LEADER NIEU STANDS ALONE IN HIS BLOODLUST!
BALTIZAR! LIZARD WARRIORS! WE COME TO JOIN THE FIGHT! DOWN WITH THE DIMENSIONAL COUNCIL!
WAIT! HOLD UP! LOOK!
AS A FORMER MEMBER OF THE DIMENSIONAL COUNCIL, I DEFER TO THE WILL OF THE WARRIORS AND THE PEOPLE OF OUR GREAT CITY! WHO WILL SPEAK ON THEIR BEHALF TODAY?!
WELL, COULDN'T HAVE TIMED THAT BETTER!
SILENCE, EVERYONE! SILENCE! NOW IS THE TIME TO TALK, NOT FIGHT!

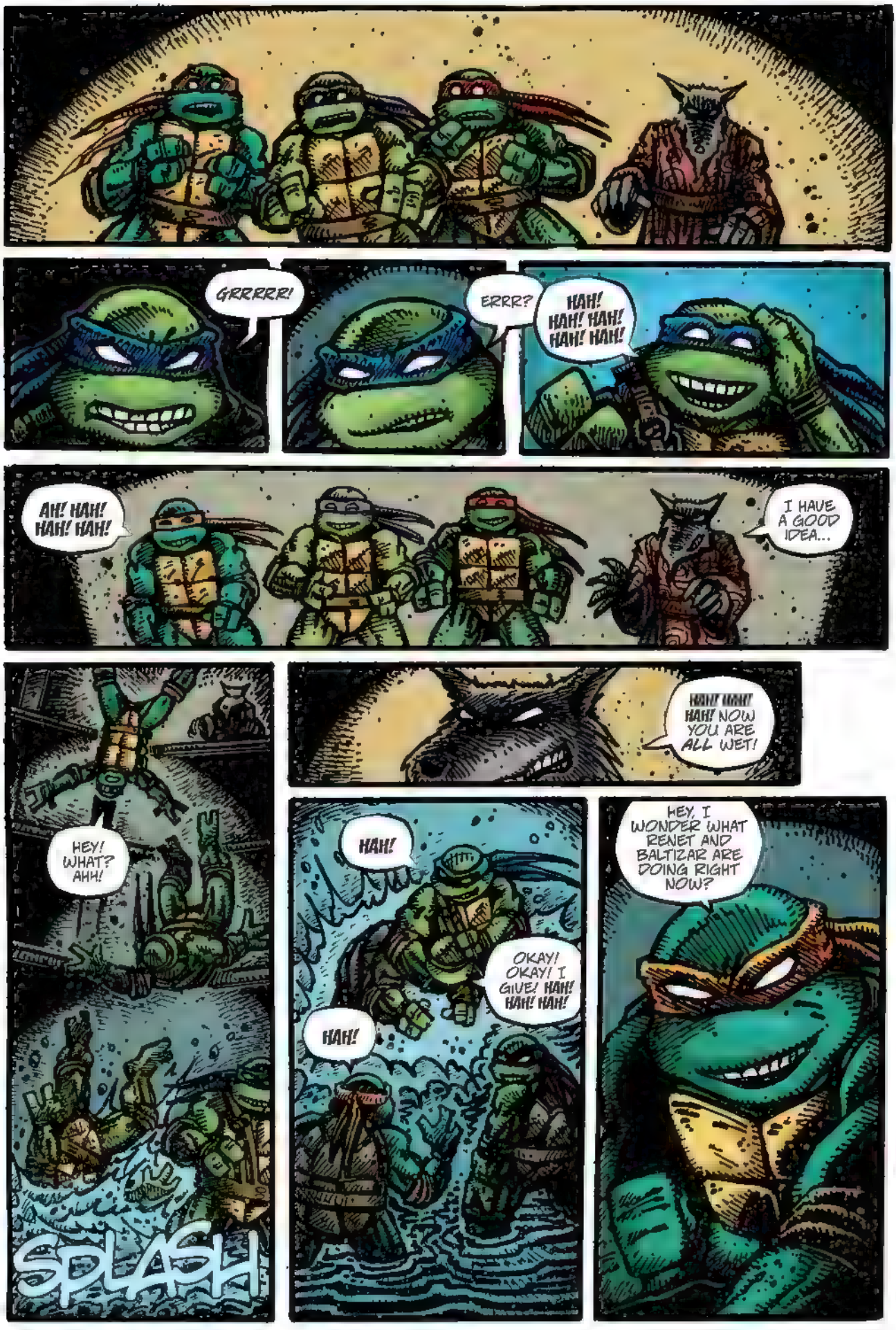
WHOA!
WHAT NOW?
SHHHHH!
THE COUNCIL WILL DESTROY THEM ALL!
NO FAIR! STOP THE GAMES!
I PERSONALLY NEVER LIKED THESE GAMES...
ME NEITHER...
I AGREE...
WAIT, WATCH AND LISTEN...
WHAT?! WHAT?! ARE YOU ALL CRAZY?! DO YOU THINK THIS WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE! HEADS WILL ROLL! EVERYONE'S!
BALTIZAR! I HAVE BROUGHT YOU A GIFT!
TAKE YOUR REVENGE ON THE GUARD WHO HARMED YOU!
HAH! YOU'RE ALL WORTHLESS AND WEAK! THE COUNCIL WILL PROTECT ME! I AM A LOYAL SERVANT!
NO... THAT IS THE PROBLEM. WE SHOULD NOT HAVE TO SERVE ANYONE.. FIGHT IN THESE DREADFUL FIGHTS FOR NOTHING... WE ARE MIGHTY WARRIORS...
...OUR SKILLS SPEAK FOR US, AND US ALONE.
BALTIZAR IS RIGHT! AND I HAVE AN OPTION FOR ALL TO CONSIDER. .WHERE WE COME FROM, BLOOD-SPORT GAMES LIKE THIS ENDED AGES AGO—IN THEIR PLACE OUR ANCESTORS CREATED REAL GAMES—GAMES OF SPORT, LIKE THOSE IN OUR ANCIENT GREECE...
...WHERE THE BEST OF THE BEST COMPETED—IN TESTS OF SKILL AND STRENGTH—WHERE THE WINNERS WERE REWARDED WITH A MEDAL OF HONOR, AND THE LOSERS WEREN'T SENT AWAY TO SOME TRAGIC END, THEY GOT TO TRAIN FOR THE NEXT EVENT... TO TEST THEIR SKILL AGAINST THE BEST AGAIN!

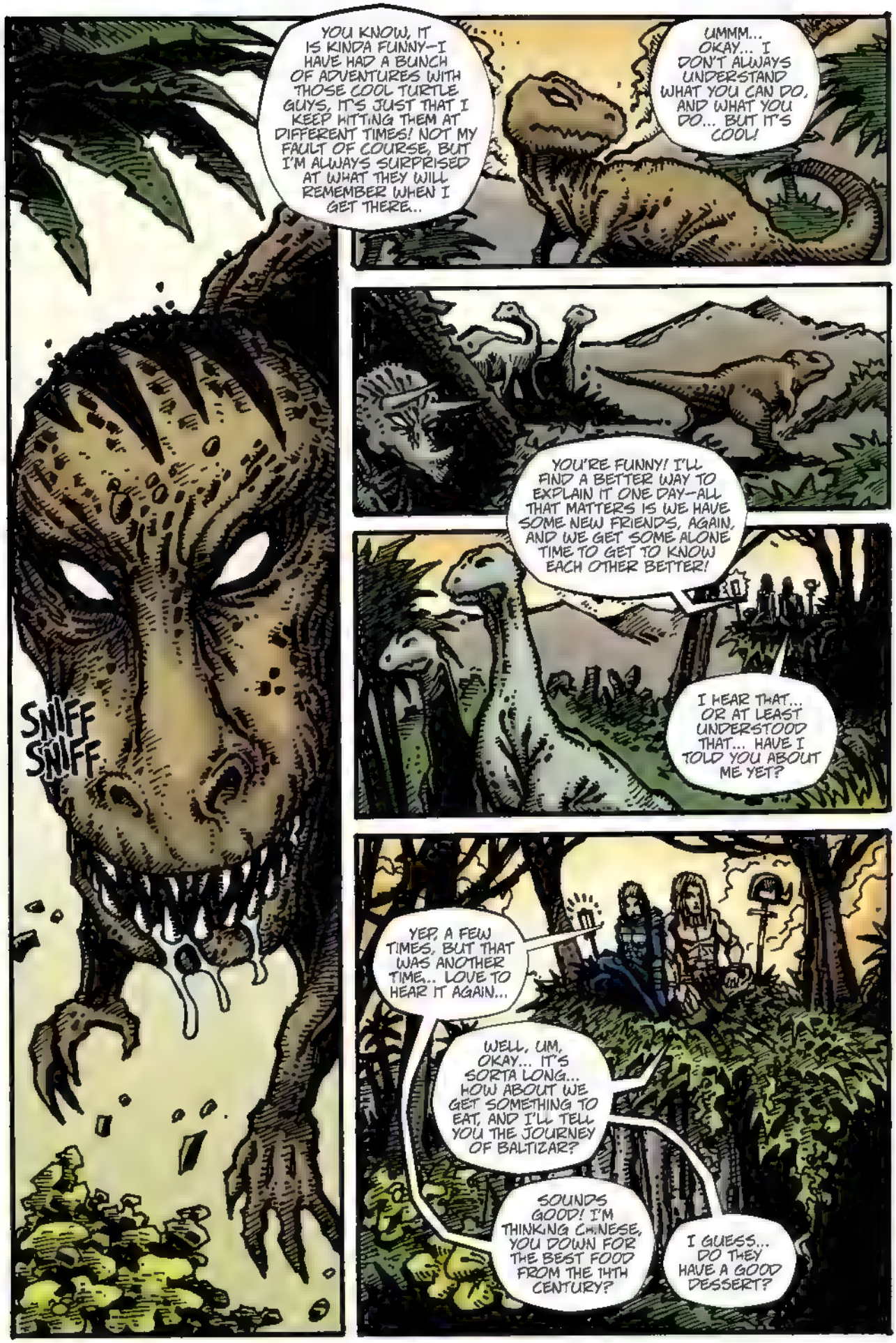
DIMENSIONAL COUNCIL, YOU MUST BE WISE TO RULE HERE. CAN YOU NOT SEE IT IS THE WILL OF EVERYONE FOR THESE GAMES TO END? SO THAT SOMETHING MORE PEACEFUL CAN BEGIN?
HOW ABOUT WE CALL THEM FIGHTO MANIA? OR, OR...
SHHH!
ARE YOU CRAZY?! NEVER! I MAKE THE RULES HERE!
NO! ENOUGH! YOU DO NOT MAKE THE RULES HERE, WE DO!
SPEAKING ON BEHALF OF THE OTHER DIMENSIONAL COUNCIL MEMBERS AND MYSELF-WE HAVE NEVER REALLY LIKED THESE DREADFUL GAMES AND WANT THEM TO END!
NOW!
FIRST, WE HEREBY SUSPEND AND BANISH COUNCIL LEADER NIELI FOREVER... GUARDS, TAKE HIM AWAY!
SECOND, I TRULY LOVE SPORT, AND I LOVE THE IDEA PRESENTED BY THE, UM, LIZARD PEOPLE... AN ANNUAL BATTLE NEXUS... A PLACE FOR THE WARRIORS FROM ALL THE REALMS TO SEND THEIR BEST, FOR FUN AND SPORT!
AND BETTING...
PEOPLE OF OUR FAIR CITY, THE CENTER OF ALL THE REALMS, I HEREBY END THE GAMES AS WE KNEW THEM, AND PROCLAIM A SET OF NEW GAMES OF SKILL FOR NEXT YEAR!
LORD SIMULTANEOUS, I OFFICIALLY INVITE YOU TO REJOIN THE DIMENSIONAL COUNCIL, AND BE THE AMBASSADOR FOR THE NEW GAMES!
HURRAH!
I ACCEPT YOUR APPOINTMENT, DIMENSIONAL COUNCIL SPEAKER GAUGE, AND THANK YOU FOR ALLOWING ME TO RETURN AS ONE OF OUR HONORED LEADERS!
SEE?! I TOLD YOU IT WOULD...
SHHH! THE FIRST RULE OF AN APPRENTICE IS, NEVER SAY I TOLD YOU SO!
WE'VE WORKED TOGETHER FOR A VERY, VERY, VERY, VERY, VERY, VERY... LONG TIME, RENET, AND I FEEL YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS TODAY ARE A NICE FIRST STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.
CAN I HAVE A RAISE THEN?
NO.

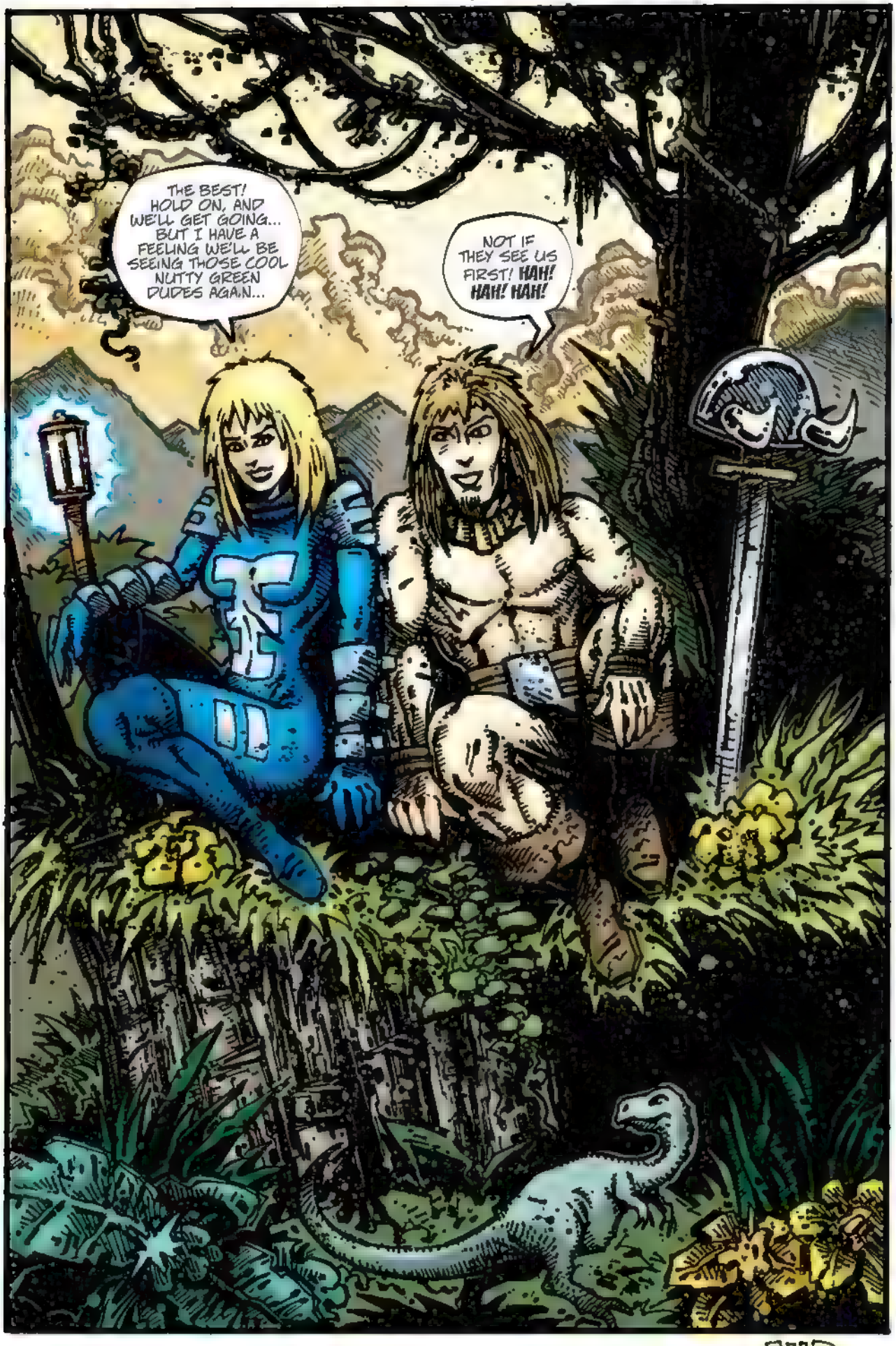

THAT WAS INTERESTING...
FOR SURE!
DITTO!
I NEVER THOUGHT WE COULD HAVE MADE A DIFFERENCE. I DON'T LIKE HOW WE GOT HERE, BUT I'M HAPPY WE COULD HELP.
I CAN NOT THANK YOU LIZARD WARRIORS ENOUGH! YOU DO FIGHT WITH HONOR!
THEY'RE TURTLES ACTUALLY...
ARE YOU SURE?
REGARDLESS... WE ALL DO THANK YOU!
RENET, IT IS TIME TO SEND THEM HOME, AND GET BACK TO YOUR STUDIES. RETRIEVE YOUR SCEPTER PLEASE...
DUDE, I NEED A SERIOUS BREAK AFTER THIS! VACATION?
MAYBE...
NICE GOING GUYS! IF YOU EVER WANT TO HANG OUT, YOU KNOW WHERE TO FIND ME!
ACTUALLY... WE DON'T KNOW WHERE TO FIND YOU.
THANKS, BALT, YOU'RE ALL RIGHT...
THANKS, LEONARD! YOU TOO!
LEONARD- GOTTA REMEMBER THAT!
CAN I BRING MY HELMET HOME?
I HOPE TO SEE YOU AGAIN ONE DAY...
GOODBYES ARE LIKE SAD SONGS... NOT LONG ENOUGH! WILL WE MEET AGAIN?!
I'LL BE COUNTING THE SECONDS!
HEY, WAIT, I CAN ZAP OVER ANYTIME I WANT WITH THE SCEPTER. BRUNCH NEXT WEEK?
BUZZ
BYE!
SO, I GUESS IT REALLY ISN'T THAT SAD AFTER ALL!
CIAO!
ADIOS!
I'LL DITCH YOUR ARMOR AND ZAP YOU BACK HOME! HOLD TIGHT AND TTFN!
WAIT- CAN WE TALK ABOUT THIS BRUNCH THING?!

BZZTTT
I WANTED A HUG!
WHOA!
GAH!
UGH!
SERIOUSLY?! WHAT THE HECK ARE THEY DOING?
FLUSH
I THINK A GOOD TWO-HOUR RUN ACROSS THE EAST VILLAGE SHOULD DO THE TRICK!
HOLY S... AH... SMOKES! HAS SOMEONE BURNT ANOTHER BURRITO IN THE MICROWAVE?! BOYS? HELLO?
NOT EXACTLY... BOY, DO WE HAVE A STORY TO TELL YOU!
HEY, LOOK, MY HELMET! AW... IT'S HER HELMET...
HAH! HAH! HAH! MAN, SHE EITHER REALLY HATED THIS THING, OR SENT IT ALONG AS SOMETHING TO REMEMBER HER BY...
I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU GUYS, BUT I NEED ABOUT A GALLON OF WATER—TOTALLY PARCHED!
LEO, WAIT!
WAIT FOR WHAT?

WHAT THE—?
SNAP
HEY!
WAP
SERIOUSLY?
UMMM...
HA SPRONG
...GUYS?!
STOP! HEY!
WHIZ
OW! WHOA!
SPHRHING
SMACK
OW!
SWAG
SPOOCH
GAHH!
FWAP
NO!
KLIK KLICK KLIK
AHH!
SLH WHIP
ARGH!
AHH!
SPLASH
FOOSH
RAHHHH!

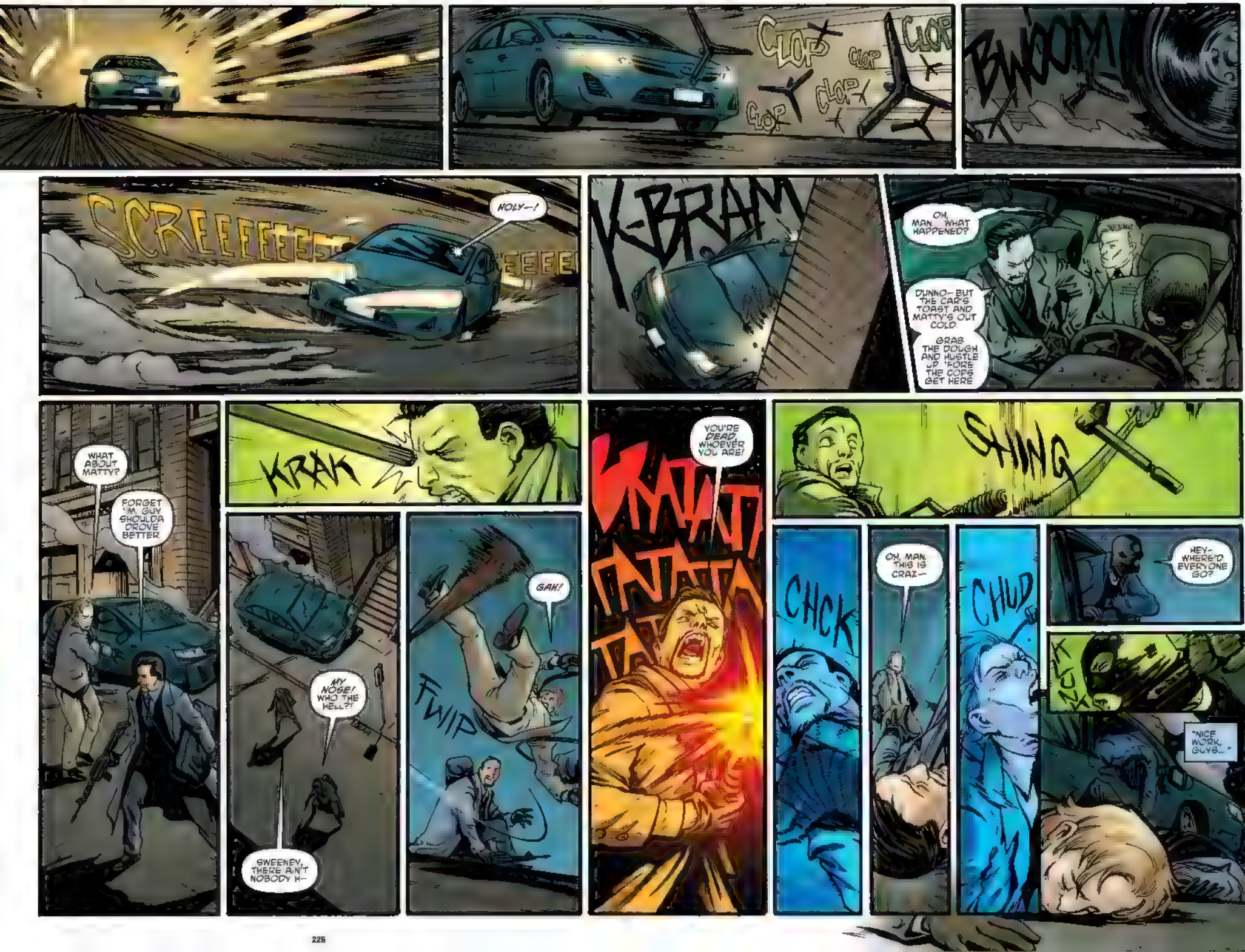

GRRRRR!
ERRR?
HAH! HAH! HAH! HAH!
AH! HAH! HAH! HAH!
I HAVE A GOOD IDEA...
HEY! WHAT? AHH!
SPLASH
HAH! HAH! HAH! NOW YOU ARE ALL WET!
HAH!
OKAY! OKAY! I GIVE! HAH! HAH! HAH!
HAH!
HEY, I WONDER WHAT RENET AND BALTIZAR ARE DOING RIGHT NOW?


YOU KNOW, IT IS KINDA FUNNY—I HAVE HAD A BUNCH OF ADVENTURES WITH THOSE COOL TURTLE GUYS, IT'S JUST THAT I KEEP HITTING THEM AT DIFFERENT TIMES! NOT MY FAULT OF COURSE, BUT I'M ALWAYS SURPRISED AT WHAT THEY WILL REMEMBER WHEN I GET THERE..
UMMM... OKAY... I DON'T ALWAYS UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU CAN DO, AND WHAT YOU DO... BUT IT'S COOL!
SNIFF SNIFF
YOU'RE FUNNY! I'LL FIND A BETTER WAY TO EXPLAIN IT ONE DAY—ALL THAT MATTERS IS WE HAVE SOME NEW FRIENDS, AGAIN, AND WE GET SOME ALONE TIME TO GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER BETTER!
I HEAR THAT... OR AT LEAST UNDERSTOOD THAT... HAVE I TOLD YOU ABOUT ME YET?
YEP, A FEW TIMES, BUT THAT WAS ANOTHER TIME... LOVE TO HEAR IT AGAIN...
WELL, UM, OKAY... IT'S SORTA LONG... HOW ABOUT WE GET SOMETHING TO EAT, AND I'LL TELL YOU THE JOURNEY OF BALTIZAR?
SOUNDS GOOD! I'M THINKING CHINESE, YOU DOWN FOR THE BEST FOOD FROM THE 14TH CENTURY?
I GUESS... DO THEY HAVE A GOOD DESSERT?


THE BEST! HOLD ON, AND WE'LL GET GOING... BUT I HAVE A FEELING WE'LL BE SEEING THOSE COOL NUTTY GREEN DUDES AGA.N...
NOT IF THEY SEE US FIRST! HAH! HAH! HAH!
END

KEVIN EASTMAN

NEW YORK CITY.
C'MON... C'MON... WHAT'S TAKIN' SO FREAK'N LONG?
BLAM
BLAM
WHAT THE—?!
FIRE UP THE WHEELS, MATTY!
BRATATATAT
WHAT'S ALL THE DAMN SHOOTIN' ABOUT, SWEENEY?!
IDIOT RENT-A-COP CAUGHT THE HERO BUG...
"...SO CHAZ CURED 'IM, BUT GOOD."
MINIMUM WAGE IS... ERF... DEFINITELY NOT WORTH THIS CRAP.
HOME FREE, BOYS! HOME FREE!

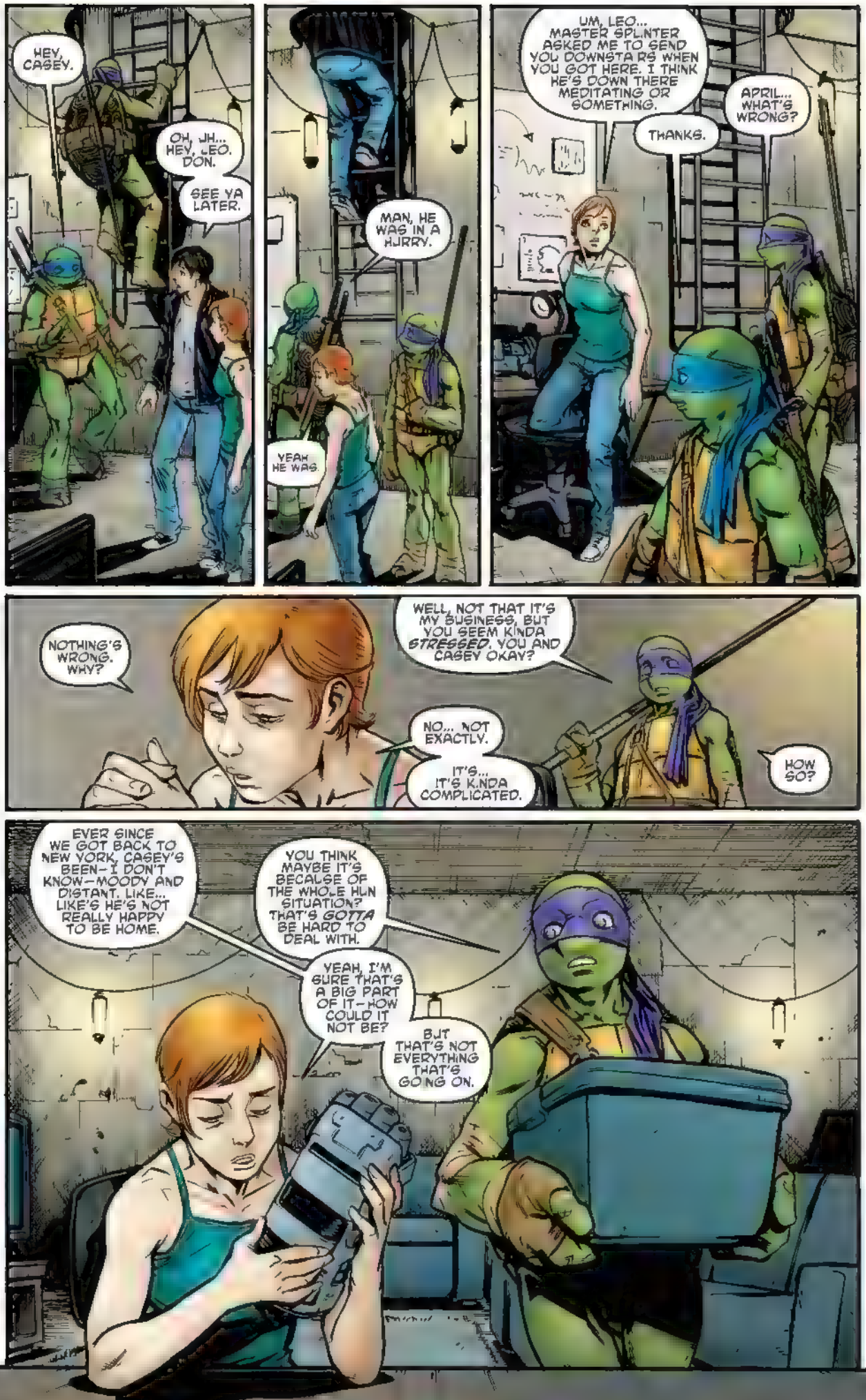

CLOP
CLOP
CLOP
CLOP
CLOP
BWOOM!
SCREEEEEEE
EEEEEE
HOLY—!
K-BRAM
OH, MAN. WHAT HAPPENED?
DUNNO— BUT THE CAR'S TOAST AND MATTY'S OUT COLD.
GRAB THE DOUGH AND HUSTLE UP 'FORE THE COPS GET HERE
WHAT ABOUT MATTY?
FORGET 'IM. GUY SHOULDA DROVE BETTER.
KRAK
MY NOSE! WHO THE HELL?!
SWEENEY, THERE AIN'T NOBODY H—
FWIP
GAH!
YOU'RE DEAD, WHOEVER YOU ARE!
SHING
CHCK
OH, MAN. THIS IS CRAZ—
CHUD
HEY— WHERE'D EVERYONE GO?
"NICE WORK, GUYS..."

...THEY SHOULD STAY IN LA-LA LAND UNTIL THE POLICE GET HERE.
MAN, WE WERE ON PATROL... WHAT... *TEN MINUTES* BEFORE WE HEARD GUNFIRE?
HOME SWEET HOME.
'LEAST WE STOPPED THOSE DUDES. LIKE REAL MASKED CRIME FIGHTERS!
THIS ISN'T REALLY ABOUT CRIME FIGHTING, MIKEY.
DONNIE'S RIGHT. THIS IS ABOUT HONING OUR SKILLS—QUICK STRIKES, SILENCE, DISCIPLINE...
WE'RE RUSTY, AND WE NEED TO BE IN *TOP FORM* BEFORE WE FACE THE FOOT AGAIN.
YEAH—WE'RE WARMING UP FOR THE MAIN EVENT.
IF WE STOP A CRIME OR TWO IN THE PROCESS, FINE. BUT THAT'S *NOT* OUR FOCUS, LITTLE BRO. REMEMBER, WE'RE NOT SUPERHEROES AND THIS ISN'T YOUR COMICS...
...THIS IS DEAD SERIOUS.
I KNOW THAT, LEO—I'M NOT DUMB. I WAS JUST SAYIN' IT WAS COOL, IS ALL.
WELL, COOL OR NOT, WE'VE *ALL* GOT OTHER THINGS TO DO TONIGHT.
WE STILL HAVE SURPRISE ON OUR SIDE, SO LET'S GET AS MUCH DONE AS WE CAN BEFORE SHREDDER FIGURES OUT WE'RE BACK.
I KNOW WE'RE ALL TIRED, BUT REST IS JUST GONNA HAVE TO WAIT...

"...BECAUSE I PROMISE YOU OUR ENEMIES *AREN'T* RESTING."
"YEAH, WE CAUGHT 'EM *SNOOZIN'*, ALL RIGHT.
"SO I HAD OL' *ROCKSTEADY* WAKE THEIR BUTTS UP.
"THEN *BEBOP* YANKED THEIR LAZY HIDE OUTTA BED.
"THOSE TWO GUYS WERE HAVIN' A BLAST WITH THEIR NEW PLAYMATES, TELL YOU WHAT.
"'COURSE, AS ALWAYS, MY DRAGONS HAD TO CLEAN UP THEIR MESS.
"BUT, HEY, THAT'S THE PRICE OF DOIN' *BUSINESS*, AIN'T IT?"

OR, MAYBE I SHOULD SAY "BIG BUSINESS"? OUR JOB ALONE SCORED A COOL HALF-MIL, GIVE OR TAKE A FEW HUNDRED BUCKS.
IT'S ALL THERE IF YOU WANNA COUNT IT.
THAT WILL NOT BE NECESSARY, HUN—YOU HAVE *ALREADY* PROVEN YOUR WORD IS TRUSTWORTHY.
I WILL BE LEAVING THE CITY SOON TO ATTEND TO FAR GREATER BUSINESS. KARAI WILL MAINTAIN FULL CONTROL OVER ALL FOOT OPERATIONS WHILE I AM AWAY.
UNTIL YOU ARE TOLD OTHERWISE, *HER* COMMANDS ARE *MY* COMMANDS.
NOW, LEAVE, ALL OF YOU. I WOULD SPEAK TO HUN ALONE.
YOU KNOW THE PURPLE DRAGONS GOT YOUR BACK NO MATTER WHAT, MASTER SHREDDER. WE'LL HOLD DOWN THE FORT WHILE YER AWAY.
YES, HUN, I KNOW YOU WILL. YOU HAVE SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED EVERY MISSION. NOT EVERYONE CAN SAY THAT. TODAY'S SIZABLE TRIBUTE IS YET ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF YOUR WORTHINESS.
WHICH IS PRECISELY *WHY* I ASKED YOU TO REMAIN HERE WITH ME. THE TIME HAS COME FOR YOU AND I TO SPEAK AT LENGTH...
...ABOUT YOUR *SON*.

"OKAY..."
...I'M OUTTA HERE.
WAIT— YOU'RE LEAV NG? WHERE TO?
THE SKARA BRAE. I WANNA CHECK IN ON ANGEL AND FIND OUT HOW THAT WHOLE SITUATION WITH THE PURPLE DRAGONS IS GOIN'.
CLICK
OKAY, BUT... CAN WE TALK SOON, CASEY? NOW THAT WE'RE BACK HOME, WE'VE GOT TO START THINK NG ABOUT WHAT'S NEXT.
NEXT?
YOU KNOW— WITH SCHOOL, JOBS... MONEY. EVERYTHING'S CHANGED S NCE WE WERE HERE LAST.
I GUESS.
IT'S JUST, HAVING A NEW PLAN FOR STAYING IN SCHOOL IS PRETTY IMPORTANT.
I CAN HELP IF YOU WANT. IT'S NOT THE KIND OF THING YOU WANT TO PUT OFF FOR LATER.
I'M NOT PUTT NG IT OFF, APRIL, IT'S JUST... I...
...LOOK, ANGEL'S EXPECTIN' ME, SO I GOTTA GET GOIN'. WE CAN TALK ABOUT THIS WHEN I GET BACK.
PROMISE?
PROMISE.


HEY, CASEY.
OH, UH... HEY, LEO. DON.
SEE YA LATER.
MAN, HE WAS IN A HURRY.
YEAH HE WAS.
UM, LEO... MASTER SPLINTER ASKED ME TO SEND YOU DOWNSTAIRS WHEN YOU GOT HERE. I THINK HE'S DOWN THERE MEDITATING OR SOMETHING.
THANKS.
APRIL... WHAT'S WRONG?
NOTHING'S WRONG. WHY?
WELL, NOT THAT IT'S MY BUSINESS, BUT YOU SEEM KINDA *STRESSED*. YOU AND CASEY OKAY?
NO... NOT EXACTLY.
IT'S... IT'S KINDA COMPLICATED.
HOW SO?
EVER SINCE WE GOT BACK TO NEW YORK, CASEY'S BEEN- I DON'T KNOW- MOODY AND DISTANT. LIKE... LIKE'S HE'S NOT REALLY HAPPY TO BE HOME.
YOU THINK MAYBE IT'S BECAUSE OF THE WHOLE HUN SITUATION? THAT'S *GOTTA* BE HARD TO DEAL WITH.
YEAH, I'M SURE THAT'S A BIG PART OF IT- HOW COULD IT NOT BE?
BUT THAT'S NOT EVERYTHING THAT'S GOING ON.

I'VE BEEN TRYING TO TALK TO HIM ABOUT GOING BACK TO SCHOOL AND HE KEEPS AVOIDING THE SUBJECT LIKE THE PLAGUE.
WAIT—I THOUGHT HE *LOST* HIS HOCKEY SCHOLARSHIP.
HE DID—THANKS TO SHREDDER HURTING HIM... BUT, THERE'S STILL FINANCIAL AID AND OTHER STUFF HE CAN USE TO PAY FOR IT. IT'D BE HARD BUT NOT IMPOSSIBLE.
THING IS, I LOVE SCHOOL, DONNIE. LUCKY THING THEY WERE WILLING TO OVERLOOK ALL THOSE DAYS I MISSED, 'CAUSE BEING IN CLASS IS THE CLOSEST THING TO NORMALCY I HAVE IN MY LIFE RIGHT NOW.
I DON'T EXPECT CASEY TO BE AS EXCITED AS I AM, BUT... I'M STARTING TO REALIZE HE WAS ONLY GOING TO SCHOOL SO HE COULD PLAY HOCKEY AND NOT VICE-VERSA. AND NOW I DON'T THINK HE WANTS TO GO BACK.
I JUST WANT WHAT'S BEST FOR HIM, YOU KNOW?
YEAH, I DO. IT'S HARD WHEN YOU KNOW THERE'S BAD THINGS COMING BUT YOU CAN'T GET ANYONE TO PAY ATTENTION LIKE THEY SHOULD.
LIKE WITH THE TECHNODROME?
YEAH. EXACTLY.
SO... WHAT'S YOUR PLAN?
WELL, PROFESSOR HONEYCUTT SENT US THOSE SCHEMATICS FOR A *FUNCTIONAL TELEPORTER.**
*SEE TMNT: Utrom Empire #3! – B.C.
THAT'S A *GAME CHANGER* FOR DEALING WITH KRANG, SO OBVIOUSLY I'VE GOTTA BUILD IT. BUT I'M GONNA NEED SOME HELP—FROM *EVERYONE*.
IT DOESN'T SEEM LIKE ANYONE WANTS TO FOCUS ON IT RIGHT NOW, BUT... I KNOW I'LL GET THROUGH TO THEM EVENTUALLY.
JUST LIKE YOU'LL GET THROUGH TO CASEY, APRIL. HE'LL MAKE THE RIGHT CHOICES, YOU'LL SEE.
I HOPE SO, DONNIE. HE CAN DO AMAZING THINGS IF HE CHOOSES TO...

"...AND IF HE DOESN'T LET HIS OLD LIFE DRAG HIM BACK DOWN."
WELL, LOOK WHAT THE CAT DRAGGED IN.
LONG TIME NO SEE, ARNIE.
GIMME A CLUB SODA. NEAT.
WELL, JONES, I HEARD YE GOT YERSELF ALL CLEANED UP AND BACK IN FIGHTIN' SHAPE, BUT I HAD ME DOUBTS UNTIL NOW.
OI, ARNIE, IT'S US— KID KENNEDY AND FIGHT'N FERGUSON! REMEMBER?
I KNOW WHO YOU ARE, KID, AND IT'S NOT "ARN E" ANYMORE.
IT'S HUN. ONLY HUN.
C'MON, BOYO. WHAT SAY WE FINISH OUR PINTS AT ONE O' BROOKLYN'S TABLES INSTEAD, EH? THE BAR'S GETTIN' A WEE BIT CROWDED FOR MY TASTES.
BUT, FERGIE, I WANNA TALK TO AR—
NOW, LAD.
HERE YOU GO—ONE CLUB SODA, NEAT. ON THE HOUSE.
THANKS, BROOKLYN. YER A REAL PAL.
CUT THE BULL, HUN. WHY'RE YOU HERE?

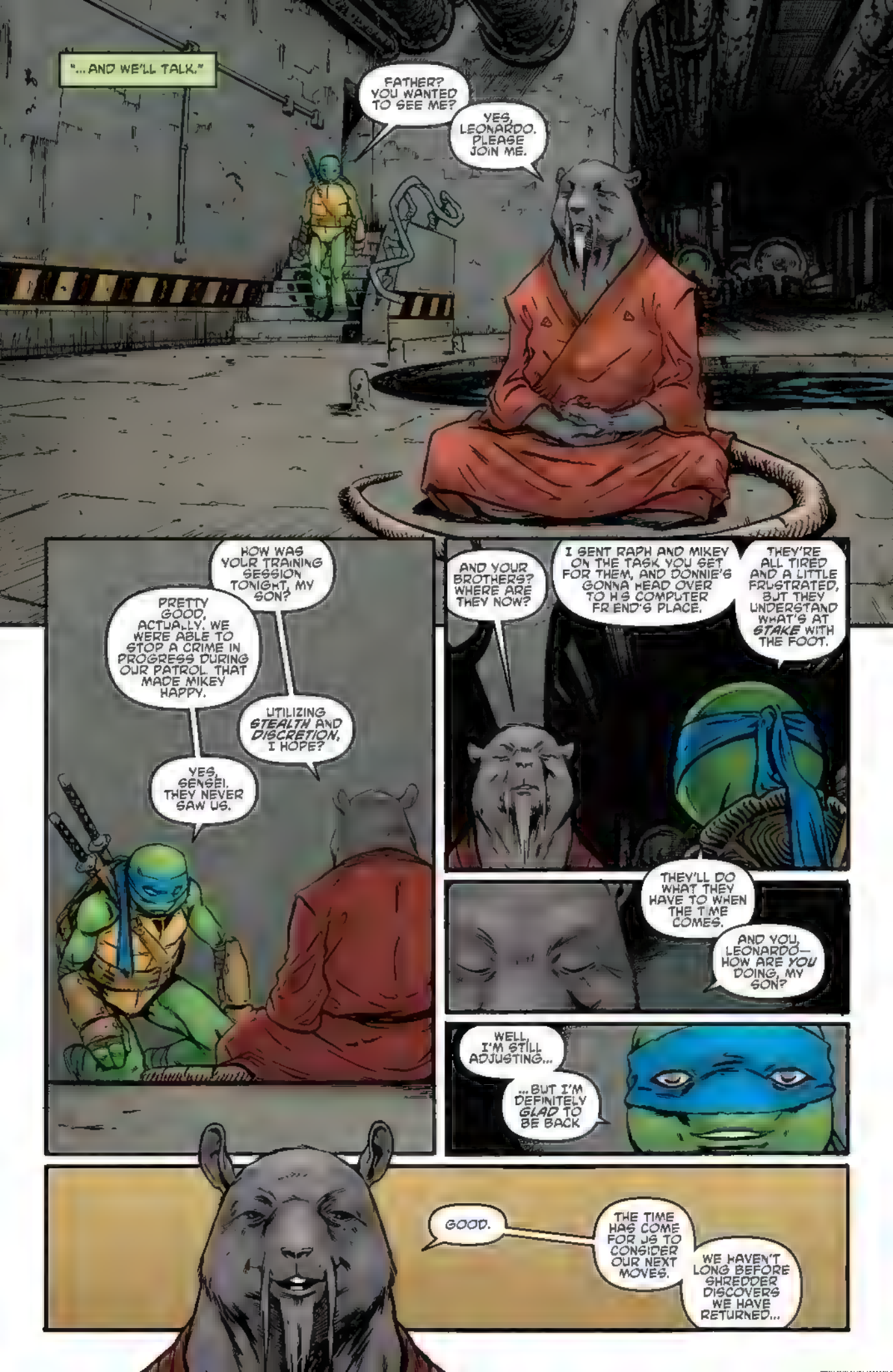
HEH. YOU ALWAYS DID CUT TO THE CHASE, DIDN'T YA, B?
SINCE YOU ASKED, I'LL TELL YA--I'M LOOKIN' FOR MY BOY AND THAT GIRL OF YOURS.
YEAH? WELL, I AIN'T SEEN CASEY SINCE BEFORE HE WENT INTO THE HOSPITAL...
...AND ANGEL AIN'T BEEN HERE ALL DAY.
'SIDES, WHAT YOU WANT ANGEL FOR? SHE AIN'T IN THE DRAGONS NO MORE, THANKS TO YOU.
WHERE *ARE* THE REST OF THOSE TRAITORS, ANYWAYS?
NO PURPLE DRAGONS TODAY. JUST ME.
THIS IS PERSONAL.
YER *DAMN RIGHT* IT'S PERSONAL!
WHATEVER BEEF YOU GOT WITH CASEY AND THOSE FREAK MUTIES, YOU LEAVE MY ANGEL THE HELL *OUTTA* IT, JONES. SHE'S GOT NOTHIN' TO DO WITH YOU OR YER STINKIN' LITTLE GANG NO MORE.
YOUR GANG, TOO, BROOKLYN. REMEMBER?
YEAH, IT WAS. ONCE.
BUT I'M WASHIN' MY HANDS OF 'EM, AND I'M WASHIN' MY HANDS OF YOU, TOO.
NOW GET THE HELL OUTTA MY BAR 'FORE I CALL THE COPS AND HAVE 'EM TOSS YOU OUT.
HEH. COPS, RIGHT.
I'LL BE SEEIN' YOU ROUND, BROOKLYN. TELL YOUR BRAT I SAID HI.
YOU KNOW, I SEEN YOU IN SOME LOW PLACES MORE TIMES THAN I CAN COUNT, JONES...
...BUT I *NEVER* THOUGHT I'D SEE THE DAY YOU'D BE WORKIN' FOR THE SAME LOWLIFE WHO GUTTED YOUR *OWN BOY.*

YOU STABBED CASEY?
INDEED.
UNDERSTAND, HOWEVER, THAT MY ACTIONS WERE NEVER OF A PERSONAL NATURE. HE FELL SO OTHER CRITICAL ELEMENTS OF MY PLAN WOULD BE FORCED TO RISE.
MY INTENT WAS NEVER TO KILL THE BOY. HAD IT BEEN...
...THEN THIS CONVERSATION WOULD NOT BE NECESSARY.
BUT... HE... HE'S MY FAMILY. AND YOU... YOU USED HIM LIKE BAIT.
YES. AND I INTENDED TO USE YOU AS WELL... AND TO DISCARD YOU ONCE YOU'D SERVED YOUR PURPOSE.
BUT YOU HAVE CONSISTENTLY PROVEN YOUR WORTH TO ME. THAT IS WHY I HONOR YOU WITH THE TRUTH—AND AN OPPORTUNITY.
FAMILY IS OF UTMOST IMPORTANCE TO ME. THE FOOT CLAN IS MY FAMILY.
AND IT CAN BE YOURS, TOO, HUN. BUT, SO LONG AS YOUR SON ALIGNS HIMSELF WITH HAMATO YOSHI AND HIS BROOD, HE REMAINS AN ENEMY MARKED FOR DEATH BY THE FOOT... AND BY YOU.
HOWEVER, SHOULD YOU CONVINCE HIM TO DENY YOSHI AND, LIKE YOU, PROVE HIS VALUE, THEN HE, TOO, WILL BE WELCOMED INTO OUR FAMILY.
IF YOU CANNOT DO THIS...

"...KNOW THAT YOUR SON HAS *LITTLE* TIME LEFT."
...YOU BASTARD, BROOKLYN...
FIAM
...YOU THINK YER SO SMART, DONTCHA?!
JUST LIKE THAT *MOUTHY BRAT* O' YOURS.
HUN.. ERK... WHA— G-G—HELL... DOIN'?
HUN, LAD, WHAT'S GOT INTO YER *HEAD*, BOYO?!
YEAH, ARN E— WHY'RE YE BEIN' SO *MEAN* TO BROOKLYN? HE'S YER GOOD MATE!
NO, HE A'N'T—I GOT *NO* FRIENDS HERE.
NOW BACK OFF, BOTH OF YA, OR I'LL SNAP THIS LOUDMOUTH'S NECK LIKE A TWIG.
NO, *YOU* BACK OFF, HUN...
...MY DAD'S GOT NOTH'N' TO DO WITH THIS. IT'S BETWEEN *ME* AND *YOU*.
AH, *THERE* YOU ARE, GIRL. SLINKIN' AROUND LIKE ALWAYS, I SEE.
WHATEVER, HUN. JUST... JUST PUT HIM DOWN. WE DON'T WANT NO TROUBLE.
TROUBLE?

NO TROUBLE AT ALL!
KRASH
OI! THAT AIN'T RIGHT!
KID! NO!
I WON'T LET YE HURT ME MATES, ARNIE!
I ALREADY TOLDYA, DUMMY...
...IT'S HUGE!
KID!
FWAM
YE MANKY BASTARD!
SKKKK

AND HERE I THOUGHT KID WAS THE STUPID ONE, FERGIE.
SMK
MRRP!
DAMMIT, HUN, STOP THIS!
LOOK—JUST STOP. I KNOW I CAN'T MAKE YOU, SO I'M ASK'N'... PLEASE. ENOUGH.
HEH. YEAH— YER RIGHT, G.R.L.E.
ENOUGH'S ENOUGH. ME AND YOU, WE KEEP DO'N' THIS SAME DANCE OVER AND OVER AND IT'S GETTIN' OLD. YOU HIT ME WITH THOSE LITTLE STICKS O' YOURS AND I BEAT YOU DOWN RIGHT AFTER.
SO, LET'S MAKE THIS EASY—YOU SPILL WHERE CASEY'S HIDIN' AND I DON'T HURT ANYONE ELSE HERE... MAYBE NOT EVEN YOU.
THEN I GUESS IT'S GONNA HAVE TO BE THE HARD WAY 'CAUSE I AIN'T TELLIN' YOU NOTHIN' ABOUT CASEY. I DO THAT, AND YOU'LL JUST HURT HIM AGAIN.
YOU MIGHTA TURNED YOUR BACK ON HIM, HUN, BUT I NEVER WILL.
YOU THINK YER BETTER'N ME, G.R.L? HEH. YER NOTHIN'. NOBODY.
'SIDES, YOU GOT IT ALL WRONG. I DON'T WANNA HURT CASEY—I JUST WANNA TALK TO HIM.
WELL, I'M RIGHT HERE, OLD MAN.
SO, WHY DON'T YOU STEP OUTSIDE...


"...AND WE'LL TALK."
FATHER? YOU WANTED TO SEE ME?
YES, LEONARDO. PLEASE JOIN ME.
HOW WAS YOUR TRAINING SESSION TONIGHT, MY SON?
PRETTY GOOD, ACTUALLY. WE WERE ABLE TO STOP A CRIME IN PROGRESS DURING OUR PATROL. THAT MADE MIKEY HAPPY.
UTILIZING *STEALTH* AND *DISCRETION*, I HOPE?
YES, SENSEI. THEY NEVER SAW US.
AND YOUR BROTHERS? WHERE ARE THEY NOW?
I SENT RAPH AND MIKEY ON THE TASK YOU SET FOR THEM, AND DONNIE'S GONNA HEAD OVER TO H S COMPUTER FR END'S PLACE.
THEY'RE ALL TIRED AND A LITTLE FRUSTRATED, BUT THEY UNDERSTAND WHAT'S AT *STAKE* WITH THE FOOT.
THEY'LL DO WHAT THEY HAVE TO WHEN THE T ME COMES.
AND YOU, LEONARDO— HOW ARE *YOU* DOING, MY SON?
WELL, I'M STILL ADJUSTING...
...BUT I'M DEFINITELY *GLAD* TO BE BACK.
GOOD.
THE TIME HAS COME FOR JS TO CONSIDER OUR NEXT MOVES.
WE HAVEN'T LONG BEFORE SHREDDER DISCOVERS WE HAVE RETURNED...

"...AND WE HAVE MUCH TO DISCUSS."
OKAY, YOU GOT ME, SO TALK. NOT THAT YOU GOT ANYTHING I WANNA HEAR.
TRUST ME, YOU WANNA HEAR THIS.
LOOK, IT AIN'T NO BIG SECRET THAT THE DRAGONS ARE IN DEEP WITH THE FOOT NOW—SHREDDER RUNS THIS TOWN AND WE GOTTA STAY ON HIS GOOD SIDE.
BUT YOU AND THEM DAMN MUTANT FRIENDS OF YOURS... YOU CROSSED HIM. THAT SAVATE BOSS FOUND OUT WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU CROSS THE MAN—
—THE WORST KIND A' HAIRCUT, THAT'S WHAT.
BUT ME AND SHREDDER, WE GOT US AN UNDERSTANDIN', OKAY? AND HE'S WILLIN' TO RETHINK THINGS WHEN IT COMES TO YOU—TOLD ME SO HIMSELF.
WHAT HE WANTS, CASEY... IT'S REAL SIMPLE. YOU QUIT THEM MUTANTS AND JOIN THE FOOT—JOIN ME—AND SHREDDER FORGETS ALL ABOUT BEIN' TICKED OFF AT YOU.
JOIN THE FOOT? HOW STUPID DO YOU THINK I AM?
THIS AIN'T ABOUT BEIN' STUPID OR SMART, CASEY—THIS IS ABOUT KEEPIN' YOUR HEAD. LITERALLY.
YOU DO WHAT SHREDDER WANTS, YOU LIVE. DON'T DO IT, YOU DIE—AND THERE AIN'T NOTHIN' THEM GREEN FREAKS CAN DO TO STOP IT FROM HAPPENIN', NEITHER.
WELL, GUESS I'M DEAD, THEN, 'CAUSE THERE'S NO WAY IN HELL I'M GONNA JOIN SHREDDER'S LITTLE PSYCHO SHOW... OR YOURS.
WE'RE DONE HERE.
DAMMIT, CASEY...
...DON'T YOU WALK AWAY FROM ME, BOY!

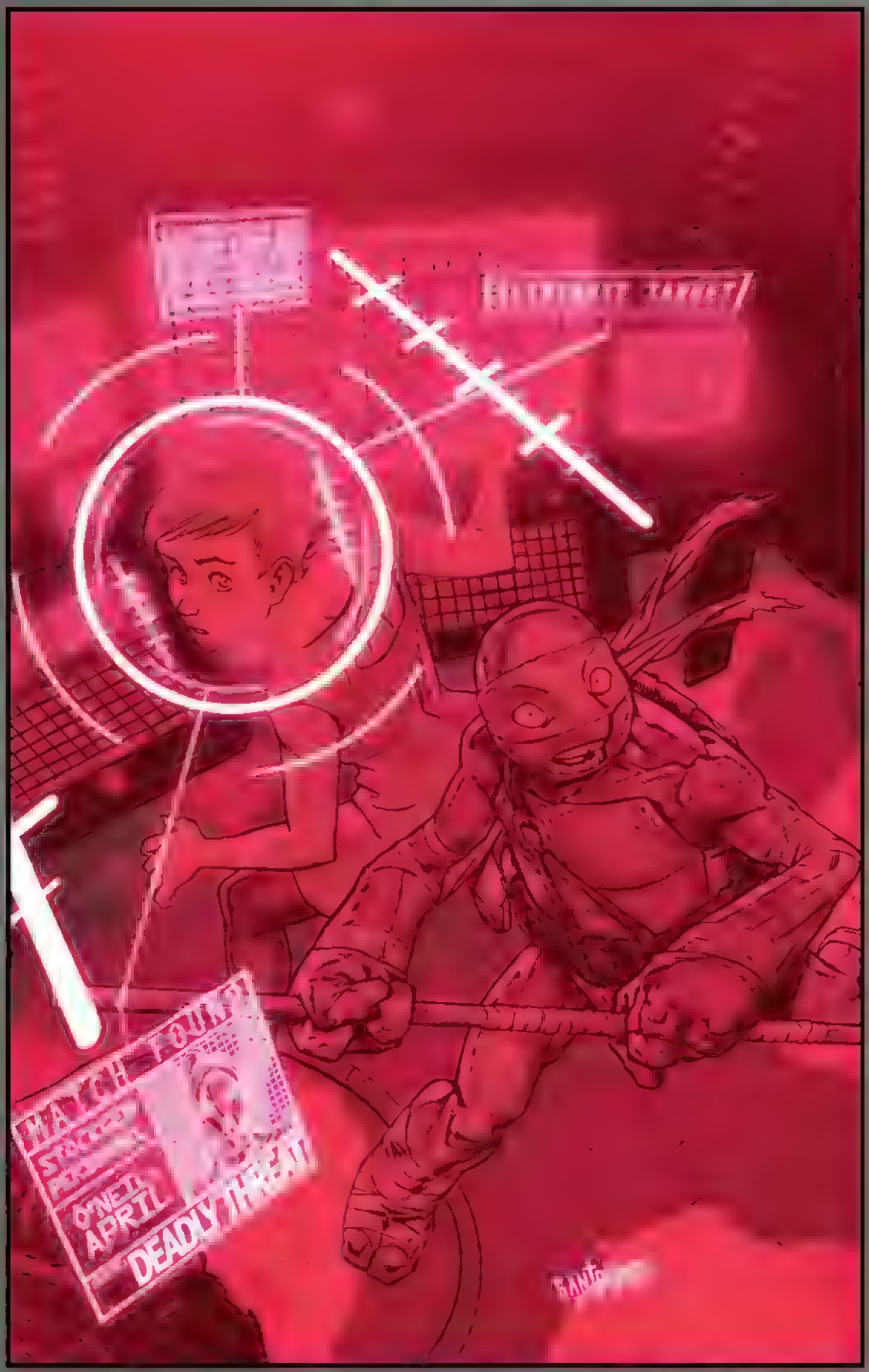
NO, DAD.
YOU CAN KILL ME, BUT LONG AS I'M ALIVE, YOU DON'T GET TO BE *THAT* GUY WITH ME ANYMORE.
I... I... WAIT... YER RIGHT.
THIS AIN'T WHAT I WANT. JUS FIGHTIN' LIKE THIS.
LOOK... I... I KNOW YOU DON'T WANT NOTHIN' TO DO WITH ME, KID. I DON'T BLAME YOU.
BUT I'M BETTER NOW, SON—AND CLEAR ENOUGH TO UNDERSTAND THAT YOU JOININ' UP WITH ME IS PROBABLY ASKIN' TOO MUCH. YER YOUR OWN MAN NOW—I GET IT.
BUT YOU *GOTTA STOP* BEIN' SO DAMN STUBBORN, CASE, OR YER GONNA GET YOURSELF KILLED, 'CAUSE THE FOOT AIN'T GONNA FORGET ABOUT YOU, TRUST ME. YOU NEED MY HELP, WHETHER YOU LIKE IT OR NOT.
I GOT CASH NOW. ALL YOU NEED. TAKE IT, GET OUTTA NEW YORK, AND DON'T TURN BACK. I'LL TELL SHREDDER YER DEAD AND MAYBE, JUST MAYBE, THAT'LL BE *ENOUGH* TO SAVE YOUR LIFE.
AND MAYBE I CAN FINALLY DO RIGHT BY YOU.
BUT... MY FRIENDS... COLLEGE...
WON'T BE WORTH *SQUAT* IF YOU STAY.
LISTEN TO YOUR OL' DAD, KID. PUT IT *BEHIND* YOU... THOSE MUTANTS, SCHOOL. JUST FORGET IT ALL AND START OVER.

BUT, WHAT ABOUT *YOU*? THE DRAGONS AND THE FOOT? YOU GONNA PUT ALL THAT THUG CRAP BEHIND YOU?
YOU... *YOU* COULD START OVER, TOO, MAYBE... MAYBE EVEN COME WITH ME?
NO, KID. THAT AIN'T GONNA HAPPEN.
YOU GOTTA UNDERSTAND, AFTER EVERYTHING I BEEN THROUGH, FINDIN' THE FOOT'S THE *BEST* THING THAT COULDA HAPPENED TO ME. I'M MORE IMPORTANT AND POWERFUL NOW THAN I EVER THOUGHT I COULD BE, CASE I'M... I'M A *REAL MAN* AGAIN.
NO... *THIS* IS MY REAL START OVER. WHO I'M *MEANT* TO BE.
HIGHTAILIN' IT OUTTA TOWN IS THE BEST THING FOR YOU. ME?
I AIN'T GOIN' NOWHERE.
HM. YEAH...
...FIGURES.
WELL, THEN, I GUESS THAT MAKES US *EVEN*, DON'T IT, 'CAUSE I AIN'T LEAVIN' EITHER.
I'M GONNA STICK AROUND AND DO *WHATEVER* IT TAKES TO STOP YOU FROM HURTIN' ANYONE ELSE.
BEFORE THIS IS DONE, WE'LL FIND OUT *WHO'S* THE REAL MAN, I PROMISE YOU THAT.
BUT, C'MON, LET'S BE *HONEST* HERE...
...WHAT KIND OF "REAL MAN" CHOOSES A *SCUMBAG* LIKE SHREDDER OVER HIS *OWN SON*?
BE SEEIN' YOU AROUND... DAD.

HOW... HOW'D IT GO?
NOT SO GOOD. BUT WHEN DOES IT WITH THAT GUY, RIGHT?
YEAH. SORRY, MAN.
YOU SHOULD BE SORRY, GIRL. BOTH OF YOU.
LOOK AT THIS PLACE! BIG OL' JUNK HEAP NOW, THANKS TO YOU TWO! AND WHY? 'CAUSE YOU DON'T KNOW WHEN TO BUTT OUTTA THINGS YOU GOT NO BUSINESS BEIN' MIXED UP IN, THAT'S WHY!
THERE AIN'T BEEN NOTHIN' BUT TROUBLE 'ROUND HERE EVER SINCE YOU KIDS GOT TANGLED UP WITH THOSE DAMN MUTANTS.
AND NOW YOU GOT HUN BREATHIN' DOWN EVERYONE'S NECKS AND THE FOOT READY TO CHOP ALL OUR HEADS OFF.
SORRY?! DAMN STRAIGHT.
ARE YOU SERIOUS? ME AND CASEY DIDN'T WANT THIS TO HAPPEN, DAD. NONE OF IT!
YOU SOUND JUST LIKE THAT JERK HUN— YOU TAKIN' HIS SIDE OR WHAT?
THIS AIN'T ABOUT TAKIN' SIDES— THIS IS ABOUT PROTECTIN' WHAT'S MINE, INCLUDIN' YOU!
YER BITIN' OFF WAY MORE THAN YOU CAN CHEW, ANGEL!
PROTECTIN' WHAT'S YOURS?! I GOT NEWS FOR YOU, DAD... I DON'T BELONG TO YOU!
I BETTER GO AFTER HER.
I... REALLY AM SORRY FOR ALLA THIS, BROOKLYN.
JUST GET OUT.
YE THINK MAYBE YE WERE A WEE BIT ROUGH ON 'EM, BROOKLYN?
NO, FERGIE, I DON'T. WITH THE MESS THOSE KIDS GOT THEMSELVES INTO...

"...I DON'T THINK I WAS ROUGH ENOUGH."
...KNOW THAT YOUR SON HAS LITTLE TIME LEFT.
...BUT I NEVER THOUGHT I'D SEE THE DAY YOU'D BE WORK.N' FOR THE SAME LOW_IFE WHO GUTTED YOUR OWN BOY.
...WHAT KIND OF "REAL MAN" CHOOSES A SCUMBAG LIKE SHREDDER OVER HIS OWN SON?

ART BY KEVIN EASTMAN
COLORS BY RONDA PATTISON



MATEUS SANTOLOUCO

ISSUE #34

THAT'S GREAT, MOM--I'M SO *HAPPY* IT WORKED, YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW.
HA! NO, MAYBE YOU DO.
ANYWAY, GOTTA GO. KISS DAD FOR ME. YOU TWO BE CAREFUL ON THE ROAD AND BE SURE TO LET ME KNOW *SOON* AS YOU'RE HERE. LOVE YOU GUYS.
SOUNDS LIKE YOUR PARENTS ARE DOING WELL, APRIL.
AWESOME, ACTUALLY. MY MOM SAID DAD'S HEALTH IS ALMOST BACK TO NORMAL NOW—MAYBE EVEN *BETTER* THAN NORMAL.
THEY'RE ON THEIR WAY TO NEW YORK RIGHT NOW AND *HE'S* THE ONE DRIVING... CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?
THE OOZE, DONNIE, IT'S... IT'S LIKE A MIRACLE.
HEADS UP, APRIL. SOMEONE'S COMING.
OH, HEY! CASEY!
WHO?!
WHOA, *CHILL*, DUDE—IT'S ONLY APRIL AND DONNIE.
OH... UH, YEAH... YEAH. SORRY.

I... I'M JUST A LITTLE EDGY, I GUESS.
I CAN SEE THAT. THOUGHT YOU TWO WERE GONNA HANG AT THE SKARA BRAE.
YEAH, SO DID WE.
HEY, ANGEL.
EVERYTHING OKAY?
NO B GGIE.
HEY, I REMEMBER THIS SOME KINDA GRAVITY DOOHICKEY YOUR FRIEND MADE, RIGHT?
YEP. HAROLD. WE WERE JUST HEADING OVER TO H S PLACE.
YOU KNOW, IF YOU GUYS AREN'T DOING ANYTHING, YOU COULD COME ALONG.
BE A NICE CHANGE OF SCENERY— HAROLD'S GOT AN AMAZING LAB.
UH, APRIL, THAT S NOT SUCH A GOOD IDEA.
YOU KNOW HOW HAROLD IS.
YEAH—AND I ALSO KNOW T'S BETTER TO TRAVEL WITH MORE MUSCLE THESE DAYS, TOO.
EH, WHAT THE HECK? AIN'T LIKE I GOT ANYTH NG E.SE GOIN' ON TODAY. JONES?
NAH, YOU GUYS GO AHEAD—I COULD JSE SOME MORE AIR.
WHAT HAPPENED?
I'LL FILL YOJ IN ON THE R.DE, APRIL— CASEY JUST NEEDS SOME SPACE R GHT NOW, THAT'S ALL.
UM, SPEAKING OF SPACE, ANGEL, THERE'S SOMETHING IMPORTANT I SHOULD LET YOU KNOW ABOUT HAROLD...

"...HE'S NOT EXACTLY A PEOPLE PERSON."
NO, NO, NO, NO, NO!
HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO TELL YOU, DONATELLO? THIS IS A HIGHLY SOPHISTICATED RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT FACILITY AND NOT SOME CLUBHOUSE WHERE YOU CAN BRING ALL YOUR LITTLE PRESCHOOL PLAYMATES.
YO, DOCTOR FRANKENWEIRDO, WHO YOU CALLIN' PRESCHOOL?
I TAKE IT BACK—THAT MIGHT'VE BEEN AN EXAGGERATION OF YOUR APTITUDE.
JUST LEAVE MY THINGS ON THE TABLE OVER THERE AND GO. I'M IN NO MOOD TO PLAY BABYSITTER TODAY.
RELAX, HAROLD—NOBODY'S ASKING YOU TO BABYSIT.
AND I GUARANTEE YOU WON'T BE IN SUCH A RUSH TO GET RID OF US ONCE YOU SEE WHAT I BROUGHT WITH ME.
WHAT? A BOX FULL OF EXPENSIVE TECH THAT WASN'T DAMAGED WHEN I LOANED IT TO YOU?
IT'S NOT ALL BROKEN.
JUST MOST OF IT.
MEH.
READ 'EM AND WEEP.
WHA?

REMEMBER THE PROFESSOR I TOLD YOU ABOUT FROM DIMENSION X? HONEYCUTT?
I THOUGHT YOU SAID HE WAS A ROBOT CALLED FUGITOID.
YEAH, SAME GUY—LONG STORY.
ANYWAY, THESE ARE HIS SCHEMATICS FOR A TELEPORTATION SYSTEM.
THIS... THIS IS FOR A TELEPORTATION DEVICE?
NOT SO "MEH" NOW, HUH?
SO, ARE WE TALKING INTER-DIMENSIONAL TELEPORTATION?
I... NO, I DON'T THINK SO. WE'RE PRETTY SURE IT'S JUST FOR INTER-SPATIAL TELEPORTATION.
"WE'RE PRETTY SURE?"
YEAH— DONNIE AND I. UNFORTUNATELY, WE HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO FULLY DECIPHER CHET'S NOTES YET.
WAIT— WHO THE DEVIL'S CHET?
HE'S... LOOK, DOESN'T MATTER. WHAT'S IMPORTANT ARE THE NOTES.
AND STOPPING THE TECHNODROME.
TECHNODROME?
YOU KNOW—THE APOCALYPSE MACHINE I TOLD YOU ABOUT?
IF IT GOES OPERATIONAL, KRANG PLANS TO TERRAFORM THE ENTIRE PLANET TO MAKE IT HABITABLE FOR HIS RACE... AND NOT FOR HUMANITY.
YEAH. WE'RE LOOKING AT A TOTAL EXTINCTION EVENT IF WE DON'T STOP IT.
FUGITOID SENT ME A PRIMER OF SORTS RECENTLY TO HELP DECODE HIS NOTES, AND IT COULD BE OUR KEY TO GETTING TO BURNOW ISLAND AND SHUTTING THE WHOLE THING DOWN.

YOU MUTANTS SURE LIKE TO PICK FIGHTS.
TRUST ME, WE DON'T *PICK* THE F.GHTS
YET YOU HAVE NO PROBLEM DRAGGING *ME* INTO THEM, DO YOU?
SWEET.

HOLD THAT THOUGHT.
HEY! PRESCHOOL! THAT'S EXTREMELY SENSITIVE EQUIPMENT, SO...
...*HANDS OFF!*
YEAH, YEAH... WHATEVER.
A'N'T THE *ONLY* THING SENS TIVE 'ROUND HERE.

AS I WAS SAYING, WHAT DOES STOPPING THIS TECHNODROME DEVICE HAVE TO DO W TH ME?
YOU MEAN, BES DES SAVING *BILLIONS* OF LIVES, .NC..UDING YOUR OWN?

DON'T BE SO OBTRUSE I MEANT THESE SPECS FROM YOUR ALIEN ROBOT FR END... PROFESSOR... WHATEVER.
WHY BR NG THEM TO ME?
BECAJSE WE THOLGHT YOU COLLD HELP JS CRACK THE TELEPORTER CODE AND...
WELL... HELP JS BUILD IT, TOO.

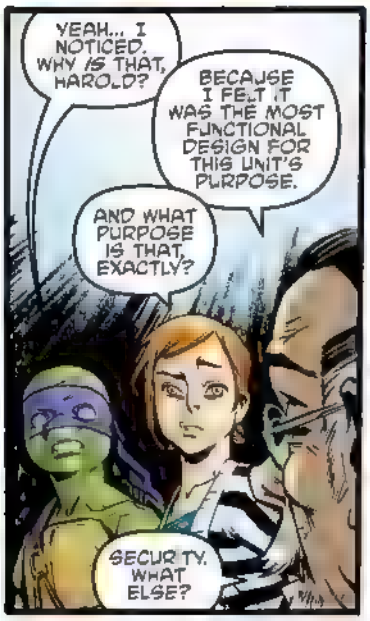
HELP YOU? REALLY? AND JUST LOOK WHAT HAPPENED *LAST TIME* I DID THAT.
YEAH—WE RESCUED DONNIE'S BROTHER AND PROVED YOUR HIGH-TECH GAJNTLETS ARE GREAT FOR TOSSING AROUND MONSTERS BJT NOT STOPPING ARROWS.

WELL, FOR YOUR INFORMATION, THIS VERSION IS OBSOLETE NOW. I'VE BEEN BUSY STREAMLINING ALL MY DESIGNS.
MATTER OF FACT, THIS EXO-SUIT YOUR NOSEY JUVENILE DELINQUENT FRIEND WAS JUST CONTAMINATING—
ANGEL, DUDE. THE NAME'S ANGEL.
YES, I'LL BET IT IS.
ANYWAY, THIS NEW EXO-SUIT INCORPORATES MY ENHANCEMENTS INTO A SINGLE, SEAMLESS INTERFACE.
ANTI-GRAV, KEVLAR, LIGHT REFRACTION, CONCUSSION GRENADES... YOU NAME IT.
PRETTY IMPRESSIVE, GOTTA ADMIT.
YOU HAVE BEEN BUSY, HAROLD.
YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW THE HALF OF IT.
YO...
...WHAT'S UNDER HERE?
DAMMIT, GIRL, STOP! I TOLD YOU NOT TO TOUCH...
..ANYTHING.
WHAT THE...?

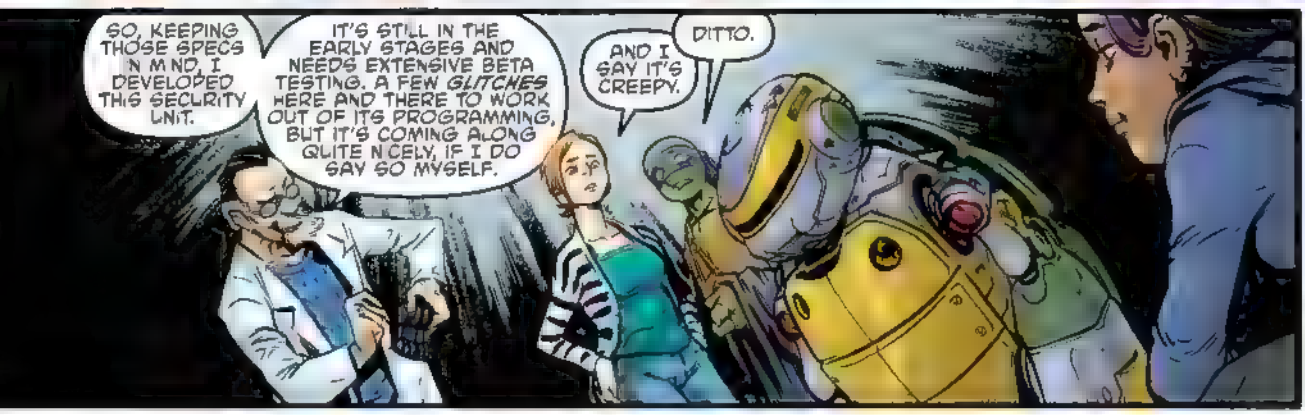
WHOA.
"SO, DO YOU BELIEVE MR. LILLJA WILL CONTINUE TO COOPERATE, MY SON?"

HONESTLY, I DON'T KNOW, FATHER. DONNIE SEEMS TO THINK THE NEW TECHNOLOGY WILL BE TOO TEMPTING FOR HAROLD TO RESIST... ESPECIALLY WHEN HE KNOWS MORE ABOUT THE TECHNODROME THREAT.
BUT THAT DOES NOT HELP US IN OUR EFFORTS AGAINST THE FOOT. WE MUST NOT *SPLIT* OUR FOCUS.
WITH EACH MOMENT THAT PASSES, WE LOSE OUR OPPORTUNITY TO STRIKE AT OROKU SAKI WHILE HE LEAST SUSPECTS.
YOU KNOW, FATHER, IT'S FUNNY YOU SAY THAT, BECAUSE DONNIE'S CONVINCED HIMSELF THAT WE DON'T THINK STOPPING THE TECHNODROME IS IMPORTANT.
I TOLD HIM IT'S NOT TRUE, BUT...
YOUR BROTHER IS CORRECT—I FEAR THAT HIS STRATEGIC PRIORITIES DIFFER GREATLY FROM *OURS* IN THIS INSTANCE.
UM, WITH ALL RESPECT, I'M NOT SO SURE ABOUT THAT, SENSEI.
I MEAN, DONNIE'S GOT A LEGITIMATE POINT—WHAT GOOD'S BEATING SHREDDER IF WE DON'T STOP THE WORLD FROM GETTING DESTROYED IN THE PROCESS?
AND YET, DID PROFESSOR HONEYCUTT NOT SAY THAT POSSIBILITY REMAINED SOME TIME AWAY? YEARS? SAKI WILL NOT WAIT THAT LONG, I ASSURE YOU... NOR SHOULD WE.
NO, NO... I TOTALLY GET THAT SHREDDER'S THE MOST IMMEDIATE DANGER. IT'S JUST...
...DONNIE SAID FUGITOID ONLY *ESTIMATED* WE HAD YEARS, AND NOW THAT HE'S KRANG'S PRISONER, ANYTHING'S POSSIBLE.
BUT SAKI IS ALREADY AT OUR DOORSTEP, LEONARDO...

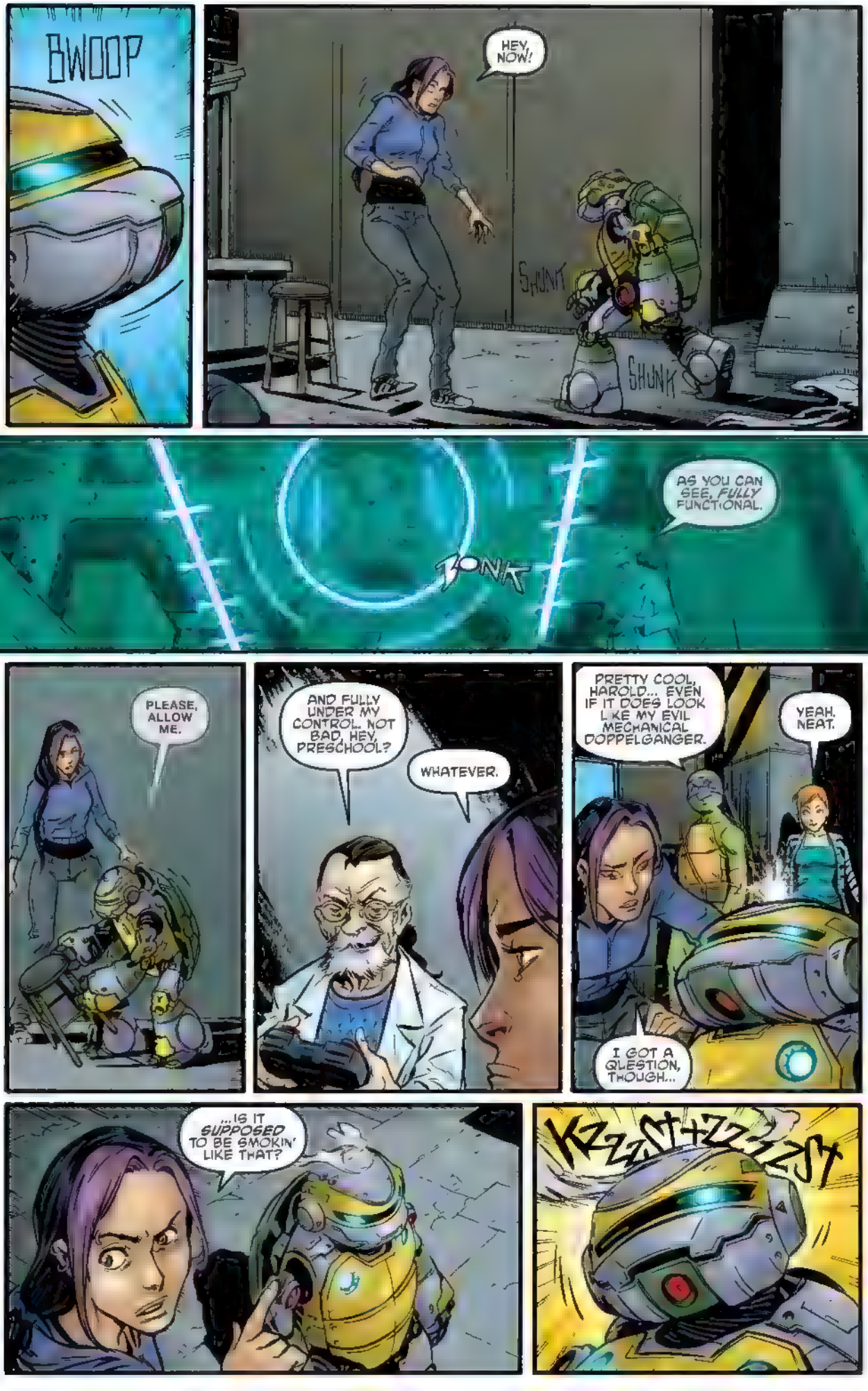
"...AND WE CANNOT AFFORD ANY *DISTRACTIONS* FROM THAT THREAT."
JH. HAROLD... WHAT THE HELL'S THIS?
LIKE I SAID, I'VE BEEN BUSY.
DONNIE, IT LOOKS JUST LIKE YOU TURTLE DUDES.


YEAH... I NOTICED. WHY *IS* THAT, HAROLD?
BECAUSE I FELT IT WAS THE MOST FUNCTIONAL DESIGN FOR THIS UNIT'S PURPOSE.
AND WHAT PURPOSE IS THAT, EXACTLY?
SECURITY. WHAT ELSE?

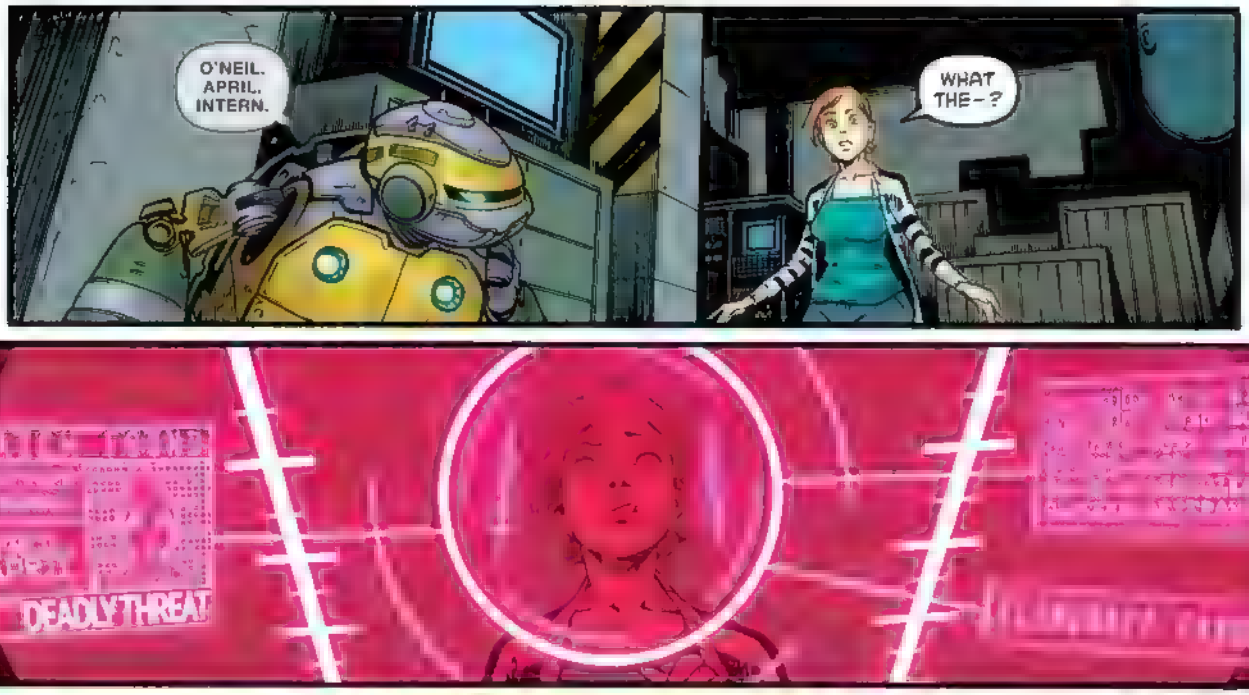
AFTER DONATELLO AND I MET AT STOCKMAN'S FAKE CONTEST*, I REALIZED *TWO* CRUCIAL THINGS.
FIRST—I NEEDED TO BEEF UP MY PERSONAL SECURITY. YOU NINJAS MIGHT GET YOUR KICKS OUT OF BUMPING HEADS WITH THE ENTIRE UNIVERSE, BUT STOCKMAN SHOWED ME I'VE GOT MY *GENIUS* TO PROTECT.
SECOND—DESPITE HIS LOW-TECH DESIGN, DONATELLO'S SKILLS... AGILITY, SPEED AND FLEXIBILITY ENCOMPASSED IN AN ARMORED CASING... STRUCK ME AS... *ADAPTABLE.*
*See TMNT: Micro-series: DONATELLO B.C.

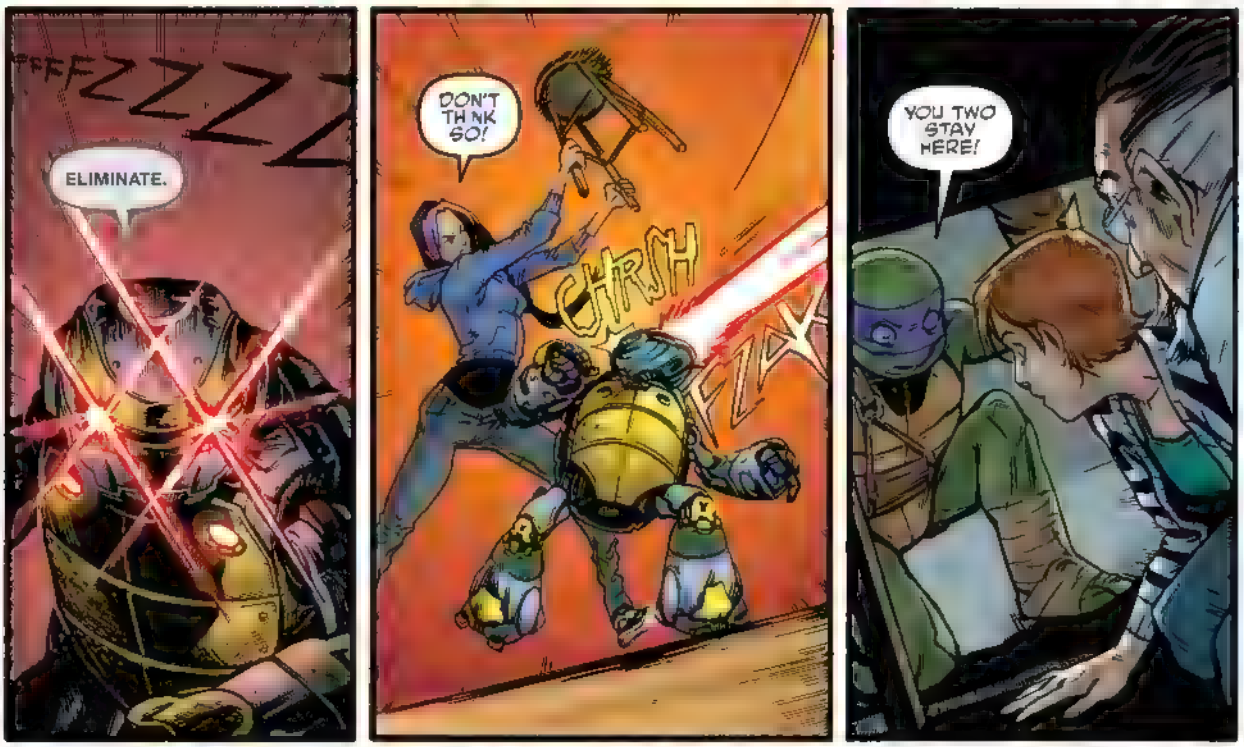

SO, KEEPING THOSE SPECS IN MIND, I DEVELOPED THIS SECURITY UNIT.
IT'S STILL IN THE EARLY STAGES AND NEEDS EXTENSIVE BETA TESTING. A FEW *GLITCHES* HERE AND THERE TO WORK OUT OF ITS PROGRAMMING, BUT IT'S COMING ALONG QUITE NICELY, IF I DO SAY SO MYSELF.
AND I SAY IT'S CREEPY.
DITTO.

WHAT'S IT CALLED?
I HAVEN'T GIVEN IT A NAME YET.
METALHEAD.
WHAT?
I'D CALL IT METALHEAD.
YOU WOULD. AND, FOR THE LAST TIME, QUIT TOUCHING MY STUFF.
AND YOU RUN IT WITH THAT REMOTE GIZMO YOU'RE HOLDIN'?
FOR NOW. ULTIMATELY, I HOPE TO ENHANCE ITS ONBOARD A.I. TO THE POINT THAT IT'LL BE ABLE TO FUNCTION AUTONOMOUSLY.
WHICH, BY THE WAY, MEANS "ON ITS OWN."
SHOVE THE FREAKIN' SARCASM, MAN- I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKIN' 'BOUT. AND I'LL BELIEVE IT WHEN I SEE IT.
I'M GUESSIN' THIS TIN CAN DON'T EVEN WORK WITH YOUR LITTLE REMOTE CONTROL GADGET, LET ALONE ALL BY ITSELF.
OH, REALLY?
BELIEVE THIS!
CLIK


BWOOP
HEY, NOW!
SHUNT
SHUNK
AS YOU CAN SEE, FULLY FUNCTIONAL.
TONK
PLEASE, ALLOW ME.
AND FULLY UNDER MY CONTROL. NOT BAD, HEY, PRESCHOOL?
WHATEVER.
PRETTY COOL, HAROLD... EVEN IF IT DOES LOOK LIKE MY EVIL MECHANICAL DOPPELGANGER.
YEAH. NEAT.
I GOT A QUESTION, THOUGH...
...IS IT SUPPOSED TO BE SMOKIN' LIKE THAT?
KZZZT+ZZ-ZZT

THAT'S ONE OF THE GLITCHES I MENTIONED. THE MOTHERBOARD OVERHEATS AFTER A SHORT AMOUNT OF USAGE. I NEED TO ADD MORE COOLING FANS IN THE CRANIAL CARAPACE.
LET ME JUST SHUT IT DOWN BEFORE THE CIRCUITRY FRIES.
click
PLEASE
...ALLOW ME
HOW DID THAT HAPPEN? I... I POWERED IT DOW—HRRK!
MEH.
HAROLD...
...LOOK OUT!
YRRK
SKK


O'NEIL. APRIL. INTERN.
WHAT THE-?
DEADLY THREAT

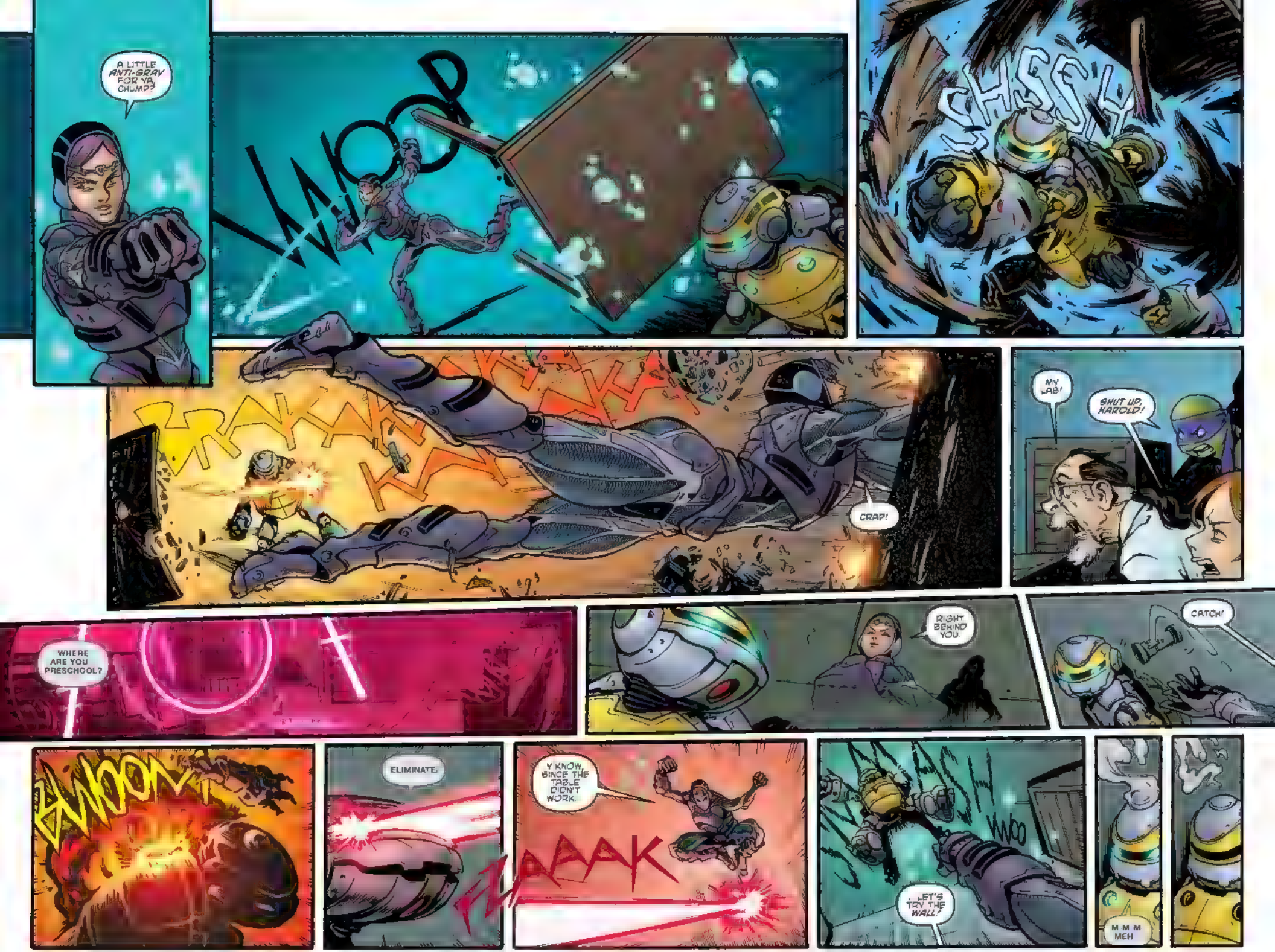

FFFZZZZ
ELIMINATE.
DON'T TH NK SO!
CHRJH
FZA
YOU TWO STAY HERE!

HOW'D THAT TH NG KNOW MY NAME?
I MAY HAVE, UM... PROGRAMMED THE ENTIRE EMPLOYEE LIST FROM THE STOCKGEN DATABASE INTO ITS MEMORY.
WHAT ON EARTH FOR?
TO PROTECT MY GENIUS FROM STOCKMAN, WHAT ELSE?
BY *KILLING* PEOPLE?!
I WAS *STILL* MAKING CALIBRATIONS BEFORE YOU BARGED IN HERE...

"...I TOLD YOU THERE WERE SOME GLITCHES LEFT."
FZAAAKK
HANG ON, ANGEL!
YEAH—NO PROBLEM!
RAHH!
CLING
THAT WAS OBTRUSE OF YOU
WOO
YOW!
GREAT. BAD ENOUGH IT TALKS JUST... UFF... LIKE HAROLD.
THE DAMN TH NG'S GOT AN ANTI-GRAV GAUNT_ET, TOO?
THAT AIN'T ALL.
CHK
CLK

MACHINE GUN!
I'M GONNA KILL HAROLD!
IF I DON'T GET MY OWN MOTHERBOARD FRIED FIRST.
FWOOSH
DONNIE!
O'NEIL. APRIL. INTERN.
UH-
-OH.
ELIMINATE.

CHKAN!
MOVE!
YOU TWO OKAY?!
I'D BE BETTER IF YOU IMBECILES WOULD QUIT MANHANDLING ME.
OH, SHUT UP, HAROLD! JUST HOW MANY WEAPONS DID YOU GIVE THAT STUPID THING, ANYWAY?!
"A SINGLE, SEAMLESS INTERFACE..."
DONNIE, HIDE APRIL AND DR FRANKENWEIRDO! I'LL HANDLE THE ROBOT!
NOT WITH THOSE STICKS, I HOPE!
NOPE.
YO, METALHEAD! OVER HERE!
CLK
CLK
MEH
FZAK
KUUH
HA!
STAY HERE. I'M GONNA TRY AND HELP HER
WAIT, DONNIE..
"..LOOK!"
TIME FOR SOME SEAMLESS INTERFACIN.. STREET STYLE.
ANOTHER LASER, HAROLD? SERIOUSLY?
DONNIE.. IS ANGEL..?


A LITTLE ANTI-GRAV FOR YA, CHUMP?
WHOOP
CHSSH
CRAP!
MY LAB!
SHUT UP, HAROLD!
WHERE ARE YOU PRESCHOOL?
RIGHT BEHIND YOU.
CATCH!
BWOOM
ELIMINATE.
Y KNOW, SINCE THE TABLE DIDN'T WORK.
FLAAAK
WOO
LET'S TRY THE WALL!
M M M MEH

WHO'S PRESCHOOL NOW, SUCKER?
OH, MY GOD, ANGEL, THAT WAS AWESOME.
I KNEW YOU WERE TOUGH, BUT, MAN, THAT... THAT RULED. YOU HANDLED THAT TECH LIKE A NATURAL.
YES... SHE DID.
AMAZING
WHAT DID YOU SAY YOUR NAME WAS AGAIN?
ME?
I'M NOBODY.

NO, MOM... NOBODY HAS CONTACTED ME YET.
YES, OF COURSE I'VE EMAILED OUT MY RESUME'.
SO WHY HAVEN'T I HEARD ANYTHING? SERIOUSLY?
HAVE YOU SEEN THE JOB MARKET LATELY, MOM? THERE AREN'T MANY COMPANIES DOING THE WORK STOCKGEN HAD ME DOING, LET ALONE ONES THAT ARE HIRING.
PLUS, MOST OF MY BEST REFERENCES SEEM TO HAVE DISAPPEARED OFF THE FACE OF THE EARTH.
DANG IT!
SPLISH
NO... NO, I WASN'T TALKING TO YOU, MOM.
LOOK... I'LL CALL YOU LATER, OKAY.
STUPID KEYS.
HELLO, LINDSEY.
OH, MY GOD...

GOOD NEWS...
...YOUR JOB HUNT IS OVER.

KEVIN EASTMAN
ROBIN PATTISON

MATEUS SANTOLOUCO

ISSUE #35

SEE YOU DUDES LATER!
YOU KNOW IT, WOODY! THANKS AGAIN!
WHAT'S A' MATTER, BRO? YOU'VE BEEN GRUMPY EVER SINCE WE LEFT LEO AND DONNIE.
WELL, GRUMPIER THAN NORMAL.
DOESN'T SEEM THAT WAY.
I'M FINE, MIKE. NOTHIN'S WRONG.
555-270-1335
LOOK, MAN... JUST BECAUSE MASTER SPLINTER AND LEO THINK REESTABLISHIN' CONTACT WITH HOB IS A GOOD IDEA, IT DON'T MEAN I GOTTA LIKE IT, ALL RIGHT?
YEAH, YEAH... NO WORRIES. SORRY I ASKED.
I'M NOT GONNA LIE, THOUGH— I KNOW YOU HATE OLD HOB, BUT I'M NOT SURE WHY ANYMORE.
YOU MEAN BESIDES THE FACT THAT STINKIN' FLEA-BITER TRIED TO WASTE ALL OF US A BUNCH OF TIMES?
WELL, YEAH—HE'S DONE SOME MESSED-UP STUFF IN THE PAST, BUT HIM AND SLASH DID HELP US AGAINST SHREDDER.
DON'T KID YOURSELF, LITTLE BRO HOB DOESN'T DO ANYTHING UNLESS IT HELPS HOB PERIOD.
I DUNNO, RAPH— HE DID TAKE A BULLET RESCUIN' LEO. COULD BE HE'S REALLY CHANGED—

"—COULD BE HE'S PRACTICALLY A GOOD GUY NOW."

"YOU'RE MY HERO, CASEY ARNOLD JONES..."
NEW YORK TECH ADMISSIONS DEPT.
CASEY ARNOLD JONES
...DO YOU KNOW THAT?
C'MON, MOM, IT'S JUST A PIECE OF PAPER.
ARE YOU KIDDING? THIS "PIECE OF PAPER" IS THE TICKET TO YOUR FUTURE, CASE.
YOU'RE GONNA BE THE FIRST JONES TO GO TO COLLEGE AND I COULDN'T BE MORE PROUD OF YOU.
A FULL SCHOLARSHIP. WOW.
YEAH, WELL, THE HOCKEY STUFF'S COOL AND ALL, BUT THE SCHOOL PART...
I DUNNO, MOM. I JUST AIN'T MUCH OF A STUDENT. WHAT IF I BLOW IT?
WELL, I SEEM TO REMEMBER YOU WEREN'T MUCH OF A HOCKEY PLAYER WHEN YOU STARTED, EITHER, BUT A LITTLE HARD WORK TOOK CARE OF THAT, DIDN'T IT?
YOU'LL DO THE SAME WITH YOUR SCHOOLWORK, I KNOW IT. YOU CAN ACCOMPLISH WHATEVER YOU SET YOUR HEART AND MIND TO, CASE. YOU ALWAYS HAVE.
MY HERO!

I'M SORRY, MOM...
...SO SORRY.
OH, BOO HOO HOO... CRY ME A RIVER.
HOW'D YOU FIND ME?
WASN'T HARD...
...THIS IS WHERE YOU ALWAYS GO WHEN YOU WANNA FEEL SORRY FOR YOURSELF.
"OKAY, LET'S MAKE THIS QUICK."

...I DON'T WANNA BE IN THIS DUMP ANY LONGER THAN WE GOTTA.
OKAY, OKAY... YOU ALREADY TOLD ME LIKE A BAZILLION TIMES. SHEESH.
RUPERT'S PIZZERIA
RUPERT'S
KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK
WHO THE HELL IS IT?
IT'S MIKEY AND RAPH, HOB WE'RE BACK AND BEARING GIFTS.
ZERIA 5
MIKEY!
SHCK
YEP, BIG GUY! WITH PIZZA, JUST LIKE I PROMISED. CANDY'S GOT NOTHIN' ON WHAT THIS BOX IS PACKIN'.
PIZZA?!
DAMMIT, SLASH, I TOLD YOU NOT TO OPEN THE DOOR FOR ANYONE.
RUPERT'S PIZZERIA 555 270
WHAT'S WRONG, FUR BALL? GOT SOMETHIN' IN HERE YOU DON'T WANT US TO...
..SEE?

MMFF... FMFF...
HI! I'M PETE.
C'MON, SLASH. WE GOT SOME SERIOUS PIZZA SCARFIN' TO...
RUPERT'S
RUPERT'S
...DO.
WHAT THE...?
FMFFMF... MFF...
HI! I'M PETE.
LOOK...

"...NEW FRIENDS."
WELL, GOTTA SAY IT'S PRETTY CONVENIENT TO FIND YA HERE, KID, IN THE GRAVEYARD. WHAT W TH WHAT'S COM N'.
YEAH? GUESS YOU'RE FINISHED WITH THE MR. NICE GUY ACT, HUH?
HEY, THAT WAS NO ACT. I TRIED, I REALLY DID.
BUT I'M A BUS.NESSMAN NOW. I MADE YOU A FA R OFFER AND YOU PASSED. WH CH MEANS...
...YER AS DEAD TO ME AS YOUR MOM.
WHATEVER. AND DON'T FLATTER YOURSELF— YOU A N'T NO BUSINESSMAN.
YOU'RE JUST A SMALL-TIME LOSER DRUNK PRETENDIN' TO BE SOME B G-T ME IMPORTANT GANGSTER, DAD.
NOT DAD. NOT ANYMORE.
IT'S HUN. ONLY HUN.
C'MON, KID—YOU CAN'T SER OUSLY TH.NK YOU CAN TAKE US?
MAYBE NOT— BUT YOU AIN'T EXACTLY GIV N' ME A CHOICE, ARE YOU? 'S DES, THAT'S THE D FFERENCE BETWEEN ME AND YOU. I AIN'T AFRAID TO D E FIGHTIN' FOR WHAT'S RIGHT.
YOU'RE SO SCARED OF SHREDDER, YOU'LL DO WHATEVER IT TAKES TO SUCK UP TO H M, EVEN ICE ME FOR NOT JOININ' YOUR LITTLE THUG CLUB.
WELL, FORGET ABOUT IT, 'CAUSE I ALREADY TOLD YOU— I WON'T.
SO... HUN... WE GONNA DO THIS, OR WHAT?
YEAH. WE ARE.
WASTE HIM.

BATTER...
...UP!
KISH
KRRSH
WHAM
UNF!
FWK
YOU WIMPS AIN'T READY TO GIVE UP YET, HUH?
THAT'S COOL...
PTWH
...'CAUSE NEITHER AM I!
"MAN, THIS IS TOTALLY MESSED UP..."

...WHO'S THIS LADY?
AND WHO'S THE BIRD WITH THE GUN?
HI! I'M PETE.
GIVE ME THAT BEFORE YOU BLOW YOUR OWN BEAK OFF, IDIOT!
UHH!
TO ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS, THE BROAD IN THE CHAIR'S A SCIENTIST FROM STOCKGEN. NAME'S *LINDSEY BAKER.*
THE IMBECILE WITH THE FEATHERS IS PETE. *PIGEON PETE.*
HI! I'M PE-
ZIP IT, STUPID—THEY FIGURED THAT OUT ALREADY.
DAMN BROKEN RECORD, I TELL YA.
NOT AS BROKEN AS YOUR *BRAIN.*
TAKIN' A STOCKGEN SCIENTIST HOSTAGE—
—WHAT THE HELL'RE YOU *THINKIN'* ABOUT, HOB?
THE FUTURE.

OH, C'MON—DON'T ACT LIKE YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT FUTURE I'M TALKIN' 'BOUT. I KNOW WHY YOU'RE HERE AND T *AIN'T* TO THROW SOME LITTLE KIDDIE PIZZA PARTY.
YOU'RE HERE ABOUT THE MUTANT ARMY I'M BUILDIN', AND GUESS WHAT— SO IS SHE.
FMMF MFFMFF...
SEE, I'VE BEEN BUSY WHILE YOU BUNCH WERE OFF HIDIN' UNDER ROCKS. THAT OLD RAT WAS NICE ENOUGH TO SCORE ME SOME MUTAGEN AND ME AND SLASH DID A LITTLE *EXPERIMENTIN'* WITH IT.
I SAID *ZIP IT*, FEATHERBRAINS.
HI! I'M—
OBVIOUSLY D DN'T TURN OUT THAT GREAT.
'CAUSE WHAT COULD GO WRONG US.N' A GENIUS PIGEON, RIGHT?
HEY, IT'S NEW YORK— YOU WORK WITH WHAT YOU GOT. AND ANYWAY, TURNS OUT MUTATIN' AIN'T AS S.MPLE AS PO NT AN' SHOOT.
TAKES A *REAL SCIENTIST* TO MAKE IT WORK—SOMEONE WHO'S GOT PLENTY OF EXPERIENCE WITH POKIN' AND PRODDIN' LAB ANIMALS.
SOMEONE LIKE GOOD OL' LINDSEY HERE.
I FIGURED, WHAT WITH STOCKGEN NOTH N' BUT A PILE OF RUBBLE THESE DAYS, SHE'D BE LOOKIN' FOR A NEW JOB, AND I WAS RIGHT.
SO SHE'S BEEN HERE FOR THE *OFFICIAL INTERVIEW* AND WE WERE JUST GETTIN' TO THE SALARY NEGOTIATIONS WHEN YOU TWO BARGED IN.

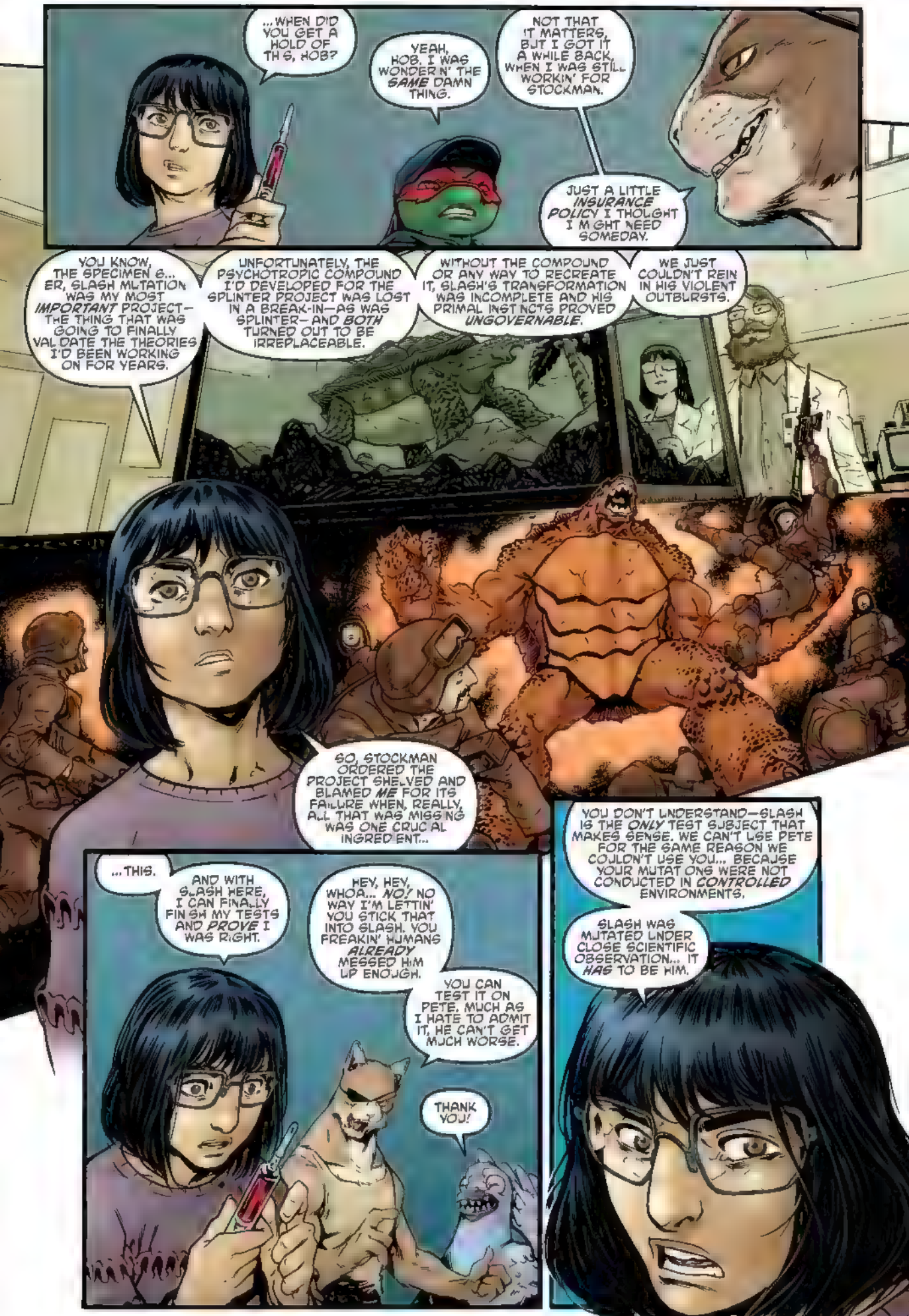
SO, WHAT THE HELL'D YOU TIE HER UP FOR, THEN?
JUST WANTED HER UNDIVIDED ATTENTION, THAT'S ALL. NO BIGGIE.
NEGOTIATIONS, MY BUTT.
YOU OKAY?
YE-YES. JUST... JUST GIVE ME A SEC TO... TO GET MY BEARINGS.
WHILE YOU'RE AT IT, MAKE UP YOUR MIND ABOUT MY JOB OFFER, WILLYA?
JUST REMEMBER--THIS COULD BE A REALLY *GOOD* THING FOR YOU, OR REALLY *BAD*, DEPENDIN' ON WHAT YOU CHOOSE.
IT'S *ALREADY* REALLY BAD, IN MY OPINION.
YOU DON'T NEED TO BE SO ROUGH.
ROUGH? *HEH*. YOU HEAR THAT SLASH?
IF THAT AIN'T THE POT CALLIN' THE KETTLE BLACK, I DON'T KNOW *WHAT* IS.
PIZZA...
SHE'S RIGHT, HOB. THIS *IS* WRONG.
WHAT? BUILD'N' AN ARMY TO PROTECT MUTANTS FROM SCUM LIKE STOCKMAN AND SHREDDER, WHO ONLY WANNA MAKE MUTANTS SLAVES AND PLAYTHINGS?
THAT CRAP SOUND *RIGHT* TO YOU?
YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN.
NO--NO, I DON'T. WHY DON'T YOU *ENLIGHTEN* ME, BABY TURTLE?

WELL, BESIDES THE FACT YOU TOOK AN INNOCENT PERSON HOSTAGE, I *MEAN* ALL THE TALK ABOUT ARMIES. YOU SAY IT'S FOR PROTECTION BUT WE ALL KNOW ARMIES ARE FOR HURTIN' AND KILLIN'.
WHO SAID ANYTHING ABOUT KILLIN'? THIS IS ABOUT KEEPIN' MUTANTS SAFE, KID... HELPLESS MUTANTS LIKE YOUR BUDDY SLASH OVER THERE.
PIZZA... *GOOD!*
MAYBE K'DNAPPIN' WAS A LITTLE EXTREME— I ADMIT IT. BUT OUR GUEST AIN'T INNOCENT. NOT EVEN CLOSE.
THESE STOCKGEN EGGHEADS GOT PLENTY OF JOLLIES *TORTURIN'* ME AND SLASH WITH THEIR LITTLE KNIVES AND NEEDLES. HECK, THEY DID IT TO *YOU*, ONCE UPON A TIME.
WHICH IS WHY I KNOW *THIS'LL* SNAP HER OUT OF HER "POOR ME" ACT REAL QUICK. A LITTLE PIECE OF SPLINTER THAT OUR EX-BOSS HAD ME HUNTIN' DOWN NOT TOO LONG AGO.
SPLINTER?
MY GOD... YOU ACTUALLY GOT SOME.
WAITAMINUTE.
IS THAT WHAT I *THINK* IT IS?
YEP...

"...DADDY'S BLOOD."
I GOT 'IM, MAN. DO T 'FORE HE GETS LOOSE'
CHUMPS...
STOP!
I'LL TAKE IT FROM HERE.
WHA... WHAT'S WRONG, HUN? ...GNGG... CAN'T HAVE ANYONE ELSE GETTIN' CREDIT FOR... ERF... DOIN' SHREDDER'S DIRTY DEED?
DAMMIT, BOY... NONE O' THIS WAS NECESSARY, YOU KNOW THAT, RIGHT? ALL YOU HADDA DO WAS MAKE THE SMART CHOICE.
HEH. THAT'S FUNNY. I... UNF... WAS JUST THINKIN' THE SAME THING 'BOUT YOU.
YEAH, WELL, WHEN IT COMES DOWN TO KILL OR BE KILLED...
...I DID MAKE THE SMART CHOICE.
WHAT THE...?
FWK
FWK
KZZZZAK
GRRGGK!

WHAT'S GOIN ON WITH HUN?
G-G-G-E-T-T H-H-E-R-R-R...
NAH...
...DON'T THINK SO.
WHOOY!
FWAM
WHAT THE DEVIL ARE YOU DOING, NOBODY?! THIS WAS ONLY SUPPOSED TO BE A LONG-RANGE COMM TEST!
I KNOW, HAROLD, I KNOW. I'M ALMOST DONE.
CALLSIGNS, DAMMIT!
UH, SORRY... KIRBYFAN.
C'MON, CASE—WE GOTTA BOOG.E.
RAWRGGH!

CRAP.
THAT SUIT IS NOT READY FOR BATTLE TESTING! GET BACK HERE!
OKAY, HAR... K.RBYFAN, OKAY... JUST GIVE ME A SEC.
ANGEL...?
YOU ARE DEAD!
YEAH?
THEN I GUESS I'M GONNA NEED A GRAVESTONE!
FZAY
KKRRRSH
GRAAAH!
YER NEXT. GET READY TO...
..SUFFER.
"OKAY, I HAVE TO ADMIT THIS IS COMPLETELY UNEXPECTED.."


...WHEN DID YOU GET A HOLD OF THIS, HOB?
YEAH, HOB. I WAS WONDERIN' THE SAME DAMN THING.
NOT THAT IT MATTERS, BUT I GOT IT A WHILE BACK, WHEN I WAS STILL WORKIN' FOR STOCKMAN.
JUST A LITTLE INSURANCE POLICY I THOUGHT I MIGHT NEED SOMEDAY.
YOU KNOW, THE SPECIMEN 6... ER, SLASH MUTATION WAS MY MOST IMPORTANT PROJECT— THE THING THAT WAS GOING TO FINALLY VALIDATE THE THEORIES I'D BEEN WORKING ON FOR YEARS.
UNFORTUNATELY, THE PSYCHOTROPIC COMPOUND I'D DEVELOPED FOR THE SPLINTER PROJECT WAS LOST IN A BREAK-IN—AS WAS SPLINTER— AND BOTH TURNED OUT TO BE IRREPLACEABLE.
WITHOUT THE COMPOUND OR ANY WAY TO RECREATE IT, SLASH'S TRANSFORMATION WAS INCOMPLETE AND HIS PRIMAL INSTINCTS PROVED UNGOVERNABLE.
WE JUST COULDN'T REIN IN HIS VIOLENT OUTBURSTS.
SO, STOCKMAN ORDERED THE PROJECT SHELVED AND BLAMED ME FOR ITS FAILURE WHEN, REALLY, ALL THAT WAS MISSING WAS ONE CRUCIAL INGREDIENT...
...THIS.
AND WITH SLASH HERE, I CAN FINALLY FINISH MY TESTS AND PROVE I WAS RIGHT.
HEY, HEY, WHOA... NO! NO WAY I'M LETTIN' YOU STICK THAT INTO SLASH. YOU FREAKIN' HUMANS ALREADY MESSED HIM UP ENOUGH.
YOU CAN TEST IT ON PETE. MUCH AS I HATE TO ADMIT IT, HE CAN'T GET MUCH WORSE.
THANK YOU!
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND—SLASH IS THE ONLY TEST SUBJECT THAT MAKES SENSE. WE CAN'T USE PETE FOR THE SAME REASON WE COULDN'T USE YOU... BECAUSE YOUR MUTATIONS WERE NOT CONDUCTED IN CONTROLLED ENVIRONMENTS.
SLASH WAS MUTATED UNDER CLOSE SCIENTIFIC OBSERVATION... IT HAS TO BE HIM.

FORGET IT. AIN'T GONNA HAPPEN.
I GOT MORE SAVED THAN WHAT'S IN THAT NEEDLE WE'LL JUST START FRESH AND FIND *SOMETHIN' ELSE* FOR YOU TO DO YOUR VOODOO TEST N' ON.
CRIPES— YOU'RE ALL A BUNCH OF WHACK JOBS.
FINE. BUT THERE'S ABSOLUTELY *NO WAY* I CAN WORK PROPERLY IN THESE CONDITIONS.
WE'LL NEED TO SIGNIFICANTLY UPGRADE THIS PLACE. SHOULD ONLY TAKE A FEW MONTHS.
MONTHS?! YOU GOTTA BE FREAKIN' KIDDIN'!
I AIN'T WAITIN' THAT LONG FOR MY ARMY.
YOU WON'T HAVE A CHOICE IF YOU WANT IT DONE RIGHT. UNLESS, OF COURSE, YOU WANT TO CHANGE YOUR MIND ABOUT SLASH?
HELL NO.
YES.
WHA—?!
WHOA, WHOA, WHOA, S G GUY... WHAT'RE YOU *DOIN'*?
NO MORE PAIN, REMEMBER? WE'LL WAIT IF WE GOTTA. OKAY?
SLASH... HERO. LIKE... MIKEY.
OH, NO, BUDDY, I'M NOT A HERO. I'M... I'M JUST A *KID* LIKE YOU. YOU DON'T GOTTA CHANGE TO BE LIKE ME.
HOLD UP, MIKE. WHAT IF FREAKY LINDSEY'S GOT A *POINT* AFTER ALL?
FATHER WANTS AN ARMY AS BAD AS HOB DOES, AND WE DON'T GOT MONTHS TO WAIT, EITHER.
SHUT YOUR TRAP, TURTLE.
YOU AIN'T HELPIN'.

SLASH! HELP!
FWUK
MY GOD
WHAT'S HAPPENING?!
HE'S GOIN' NUCLEAR!
SKRK
GRAAH!
HEAD... HURTS!
I GOTTA HELP HIM!
MIKEY! WAIT!
SLASH, BUDDY, CALM DOWN, IT'S M- HRK!
KRAK
HURTS!
MIKEY!
YOU'RE GO'N DOWN!
WHAT THE HELL'S WRONG WITH HIM?!
I, DON'T KNOW. THE PSYCHOTROPIC INJECTION... IT MUST BE AFFECTING HIS NEUROLOGICAL SYSTEM.
HOW DO WE STOP HIM, DAMMIT?
CRAP!
WE, WE ALWAYS TASERED HIM 'N THE PAST.
OFF!
SMSH

I SWEAR, YOU'RE DEAD IF THIS DON'T WORK, EGGHEAD!
WE'RE ALL GOING TO BE DEAD IF THAT DOESN'T WORK!
GRAHHH!
RAPH!
DON'T DO IT, BIG FELLA!
MY HEAD...
...FEELS SO STRANGE.

I THINK THAT SHOT *WORKED*, DUDE. YOU SOUND DIFFERENT.
I... I FEEL DIFFERENT. THERE WAS ALL THIS PAIN, TERRIBLE PAIN, BUT NOW... NOW THINGS ARE SO...
...SO CLEAR.
IT'S OKAY, EVERYONE. I'M ALL RIGHT NOW.
YOU CAN LOWER YOUR GUN, HOB. I WON'T *HURT* ANYONE.
WELL, EGGHEAD, GUESS YOU GOT YOUR PROOF THE RAT'S BLOOD WORKS.
I WAS *RIGHT* ALL ALONG.
GREAT. YOU WERE RIGHT WHOOP-DEE-DO.
ONLY QUEST ON I GOT IS...
.. *WHERE* THE HECK DO WE GO FROM HERE?
"YOU'RE *SURE* YOU'RE OKAY?"

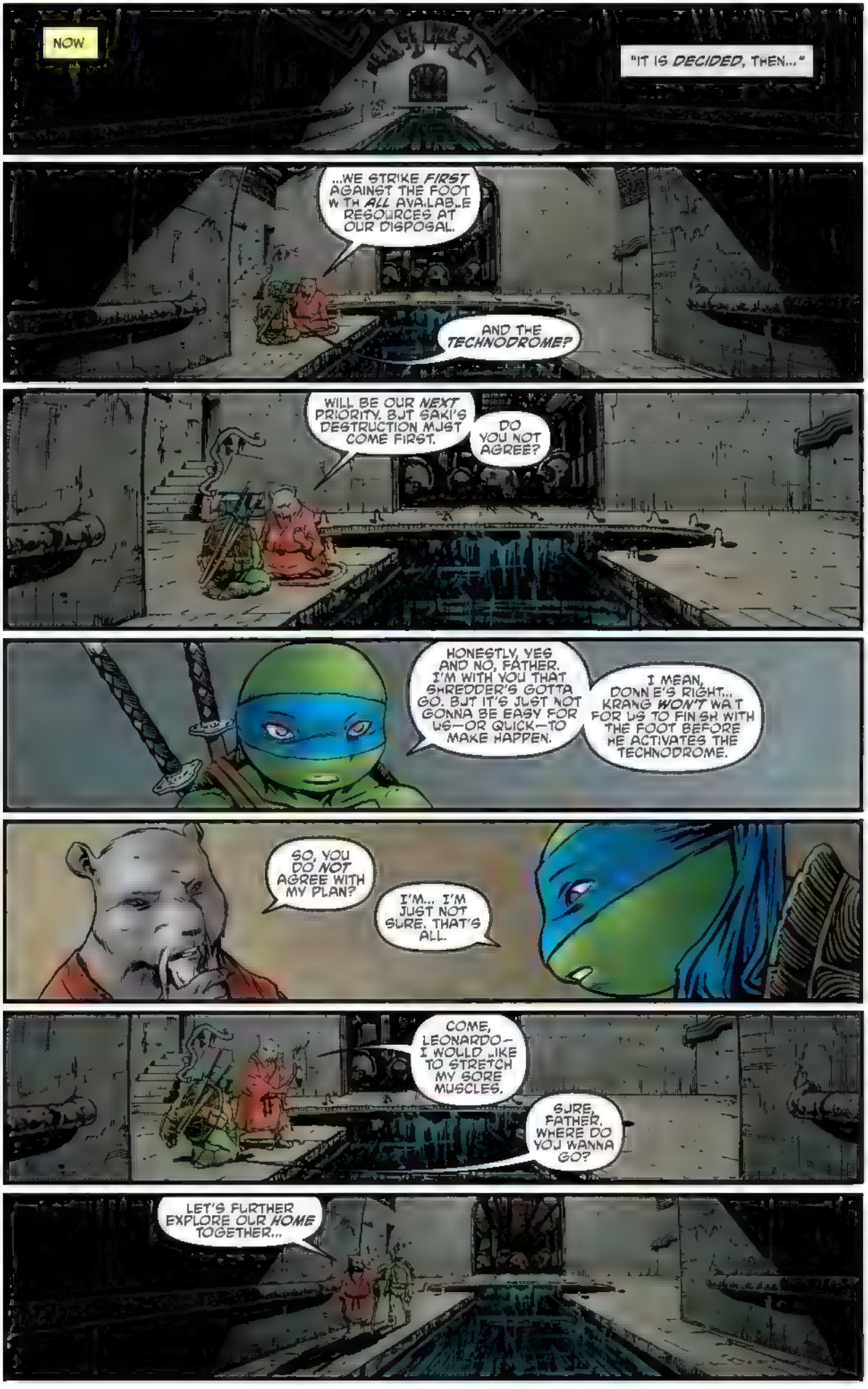
'CAUSE I CAN GET YOU TO THE HOSP TAL IF YOU NEED IT.
NAH, I'M FINE. HOW'D YOU *FIND* ME, ANYWAYS?
YOU E THER SHOOT PUCKS OR VISIT YOUR MOM'S GRAVE WHENEVER YOU NEED TO CLEAR YOUR HEAD. CAME TO THE *CEMETERY* WHEN I DIDN'T F ND YOU AT THE RINK.
SO WHERE THE HELL'D THAT GET-UP COME FROM?
FROM DONN E AND APRIL'S GEEK FR END HARO_D.
TURNS OUT I'M KIND OF A *WIZ* WITH THIS TECH STUFF, BEL EVE IT OR NOT.
THE WAY YOU STOMPED OFF EAR_IER, HAD A *FEELIN'* YOU'D FIND YOURSE_F SOME TROUBLE—YOU'RE GOOD AT THAT.
SO I TALKED HAROLD INTO TESTIN' THE SU.T'S RADIO...
...HE'S PROBABLY GONNA SET IT TO *SELF-DESTRUCT* IF I DON'T GET T BACK TO H M SOON.
SPEAKIN' OF SELF-DESTRUCTIN', I KNOW THIS STUFF WITH YOUR DAD'S EATIN' AT YOU, MAN, BUT YOU SERIOUSLY GOTTA STEP AWAY BEFORE IT *KILLS* YOU.
YOU GOTTA RISE ABOVE IT, CASEY.
SKSH
FORGET THE LOSERS IN YOUR LIFE AND F ND YOUR *OWN* WAY—A BETTER WAY.
THAT'S WHAT *I'M* DOIN'.
"JUST REMEMBER, MAN, NO MATTER HOW BAD THINGS GET...
"...YOU'RE NEVER AS *ALONE* AS YOU TH.NK."

ART BY KEVIN EASTMAN
COLORS BY RONDA PATTISON

art by MATEUS SANTOLOUCO

ISSUE #36

ONCE UPON A TIME...
...RATS!
THEY FOUGHT THE DOGS AND KILLED THE CATS.
AND BIT THE BABIES IN THE CRADLES.
AND ATE THE CHEESES OUT OF THE VATS.
AND LICKED THE SOUP FROM THE COOKS' OWN LADLES.
SPLIT OPEN THE KEGS OF SALTED SPRATS.
MADE NESTS INSIDE MEN'S SUNDAY HATS
AND EVEN SPOILED THE WOMEN'S CHATS.
WITH SHRIEKING AND SQUEAKING...
...IN FIFTY DIFFERENT SHARPS AND FLATS.


NOW
"IT IS DECIDED, THEN..."
...WE STRIKE FIRST AGAINST THE FOOT WITH ALL AVAILABLE RESOURCES AT OUR DISPOSAL.
AND THE TECHNODROME?
WILL BE OUR NEXT PRIORITY. BUT SAKI'S DESTRUCTION MUST COME FIRST.
DO YOU NOT AGREE?
HONESTLY, YES AND NO, FATHER. I'M WITH YOU THAT SHREDDER'S GOTTA GO. BUT IT'S JUST NOT GONNA BE EASY FOR US—OR QUICK—TO MAKE HAPPEN.
I MEAN, DONNIE'S RIGHT... KRANG WON'T WAIT FOR US TO FINISH WITH THE FOOT BEFORE HE ACTIVATES THE TECHNODROME.
SO, YOU DO NOT AGREE WITH MY PLAN?
I'M... I'M JUST NOT SURE. THAT'S ALL.
COME, LEONARDO— I WOULD LIKE TO STRETCH MY SORE MUSCLES.
SURE, FATHER. WHERE DO YOU WANNA GO?
LET'S FURTHER EXPLORE OUR HOME TOGETHER...

"...AS WE FURTHER EXPLORE YOUR DOUBTS."
PIZZA
I GUESS WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO TRY TO GO THROUGH A WINDOW, THEN. LET'S JUST HOPE NO POLICE SHOW UP.
FINE. WHO'S GOING TO DO IT? YOU OR...
THE SECOND TIME AROUND $-SHOP $
CLOSED
RARGH!
...ME?
CASEY?
MR. AND MRS. O'NEIL?
WHAT... WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
DIDN'T APRIL TELL YOU?
WE'RE MOVING IN.

YEAH, SHE, JH.. SHE M GHTA MENTIONED SOMETHIN' LIKE THAT.
WHY'RE YOU GOIN' THROUGH THE WINDOW, THOUGH?
OH... WE D DN'T REALIZE APRIL HAD CHANGED THE LOCKS AND NSTEAD OF BOTHER NG HER, WE WERE, UM, TRYING TO F GURE OUT ANOTHER WAY TO GET INSIDE.
ACTUALLY, CHANGING THE LOCKS WAS MY IDEA. I KNOW THIS 'HOOD TOO WELL.
AND YOU DON'T GOTTA BREAK IN. WE KEEP A SPARE HIDDEN, JUST IN CASE.
MY GOD, CASEY.. WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR POOR FACE?
OH, UH... JUST A LITTLE DISAGREEMENT WITH MY DAD. IT'S NOTH.N'.
THAT IS NOT NOTH NG. WHY ON EARTH WOULD HE DO THIS TO YOU?
LONG STORY. PLEASE... JUST DON'T TELL APRIL, OKAY?
SHE'S ALREADY WORRYIN' 'BOUT ME AS IT IS.
I CAN SEE WHY C'MON... WE'LL KEEP APRIL OUT OF THIS FOR NOW, BUT WE REALLY NEED TO GET YOU SOME ICE.
NO, REALLY... THAT'S OKAY. I'M FINE. I SHOULD JUST GET GOIN'.
AND WHERE TO, EXACTLY?
I...
...I DON'T KNOW.
WELL, I DO. YOU'RE COMING INSIDE WITH US. WE'LL GET THOSE INJUR ES TAKEN CARE OF AND YOU CAN TE.L US WHAT THE HECK'S GOING ON WITH YOU.
LIKE I SAID--LONG STORY.
THAT'S OKAY, SON. WE'RE N NO RUSH TO GET RI□ OF YOU.

IT SEEMS WE REMAIN AT AN *IMPASSE*, MY SON.
WELL, WE AREN'T EXACTLY SEEING EYE-TO-EYE STRATEGICALLY, SENSEI, *THAT'S* FOR SURE.
FATHER, CAN I... CAN I SPEAK TO YOU ABOUT MOTHER?
OF COURSE, MY SON.
I... I KEEP GOING BACK TO HOW SHE APPEARED TO ME AND HELPED ME BREAK AWAY FROM SHREDDER'S CONTROL.
SOMETIMES I FEEL LIKE SHE'S *ACTUALLY* WATCHING OVER US.
EVEN IF THAT MEANS I'M COMPLETELY NUTS.
THAT DOES NOT MAKE YOU CRAZY. YOUR PRECIOUS MOTHER CAME TO *ME* IN DREAMS AS WELL.
REALLY?

YES. WITNESSING THE EMOTIONAL TORTURE YOU'D SUFFERED IN SHREDDER'S CAPTIVITY... IT CAUSED ME GREAT DISTRESS.
THEN YOUR MOTHER APPEARED IN MY DREAMS, REMINDING ME THAT YOU HAD RETURNED TO US *SAFELY* AND THAT LOVE WOULD FIND A WAY TO SEE US THROUGH *WHATEVER* HARDSHIPS FOLLOWED.
THEN... DON'T YOU THINK IT WOULD *BOTHER* HER THAT WE'RE GOING AFTER SHREDDER THE WAY WE ARE?
I MEAN, AFTER YOU *PROMISED* HER NOT TO GET REVENGE AGAINST HIM?
AH, YES... THAT.
IT IS TRUE— I MADE YOUR MOTHER SUCH A PROMISE ONCE. BUT THAT WAS A *LIFETIME* AGO, MY SON. A LIFETIME RUTHLESSLY DESTROYED BY OROKU SAKI'S CRUELTY...
... AND BY MY INABILITY TO ACT.
COME ON—YOU CAN'T BLAME *YOURSELF* FOR THAT, FATHER.

MY SON, AT ITS CORE, MY PROMISE TO YOJR MOTHER WAS TO PROTECT YOU, OUR BELOVED CHILDREN, AND I INTEND TO DO SO BY ALL MEANS NECESSARY.
I DO NOT SEEK VENGEANCE, LEONARDO—I WISH ONLY TO FULFILL MY COMMITMENT TO HER... AND TO YOU.
TO WATCH OVER MY FAMILY AND KEEP THEM SAFE.
I WILL FND A WAY TO PUT OROKJ SAKI'S DARKNESS BEHIND US.
CLICK
MY SON?
MY SON, I... I CANNOT MOVE... ARE YOU THERE?
LEONARDO?!
YOL WASTE YOLR BREATH, RAT. YOLR CHILD W LL NOT ANSWER.
WHO... WHO IS SPEAK.NG?
I HAVE GONE BY MANY NAMES SO MANY, I'VE FORGOTTEN THEM ALL.
BLT YOJ...

...YOU MAY CALL ME THE RAT KING.
WELCOME TO MY HOME.

WHAT REMARKABLE CREATURES YOU ARE. ANIMALS, AND YET... SOMETHING MORE.
I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING QUITE LIKE YOU AND I HAVE SEEN MUCH IN MY TIME, BELIEVE ME.
REMARKABLE INDEED.
WHAT DEVILRY IS THIS? WHERE ARE WE?
AH, YES, YOU HAVE QUESTIONS THAT IS TO BE EXPECTED.
I SHALL ENDEAVOR TO PROVIDE ANSWERS.
FIRSTLY, LIKE YOUR MUCH SMALLER BRETHREN SURROUNDING US, YOU ARE NOW IN MY CARE.
IN MY THRALL, ONE MIGHT SAY...
GULP
...BUT I AM MORE CIVILIZED THAN THAT.

AS SUCH, YOU WILL BOTH BE UNABLE TO MOVE FOR THE MOMENT. YOUR RAPT ATTENTION IS OF THE UTMOST IMPORTANCE.
WE HAVE SO MUCH TO LEARN ABOUT EACH OTHER, AFTER ALL.
AND WHENEVER ELDERS SUCH AS WE ARE ENGAGED IN IMPORTANT CONVERSATION, IT IS BEST FOR CHILDREN TO BE SEEN AND NOT HEARD.
PERHAPS A BIT OLD-FASHIONED ON MY PART, I REALIZE, BUT THERE YOU ARE
FEAR NOT, HOWEVER— HIS SILENCE IS NO MORE PERMANENT THAN YOUR PARALYSIS.
MY SISTER'S HAND WORK IS ANOTHER MATTER, HOWEVER
THIS CHILD REEKS OF IT.
IN ANSWER TO YOUR SECOND QUERY, I HAVE ALREADY TOLD YOU—WE ARE IN MY HOME, SUCH AS IT IS. A BIT OUT OF THE WAY, BUT QUAINT TO BE HONEST BUT COZY NONETHELESS... IF YOU'LL ALLOW ME THE SMALL BOAST.
IT IS WHAT THE CELTS CALL A THIN PLACE. A BETWEEN WORLD.
NEITHER HERE NOR THERE.

THERE ARE OTHER THIN PLACES—BUT FOR NOW, THIS IS MINE.
WHY HAVE YOU BROUGHT US HERE?
WHY, INDEED.
FOR THAT ANSWER, A HISTORY LESSON IS IN ORDER.
ANCIENT HISTORY.

"I COME FROM A *DISTANT* PAST, WHEN MORTAL MANK ND WAS IN TS INFANCY AND MY FAMILY— MIGHTY BE NGS ALL—*COMPETED* TO RULE THE WORLD.
"A WORLD, SADLY, *LOST* TO MEMORY.
"I, LIKE MY BRETHREN, CONTINLED ON, HOWEVER, REMA NING H DDEN AMONGST A NEWLY THRIVING MANKIND AND US NG OUR POWERS SPARINGLY.
"IN *MY* CASE, SOMETIMES TO REWARD.
"SOMETIMES TO PUNISH."

"BUT ALWAYS IN ANTICIPATION OF THE *GREAT GAME* TO COME.
"WHEN MY FAMILY AND I WOULD *AGAIN* COMPETE FOR THE THRONE OF THE WORLD.
"A WORLD ONCE MORE READY FOR THE *EXTRAORDINARY*..."

.. AS IN THE DAYS OF NOE.
WHAT HAS THIS TO DO WITH US?
OH, NOTHING. EVERYTHING THAT WILL BE FOR THOSE LIKE ME—YOUR MASTERS—TO DECIDE IN TIME.
THE WORLD IS OUR CHESSBOARD, AND EVERY CHESSBOARD REQUIRES PAWNS. PAWNS THAT CAN BE SAVED OR SACRIFICED
SOMETIMES THAT DEPENDS UPON THE WHIMS OF THE PLAYER—OTHER TIMES, THE STRENGTH OF THE MOVE IN PLAY
AND TONIGHT, MY PAWN, IT IS MY WHIM TO FIND OUT JUST HOW STRONG YOU ARE.
I THINK WE'VE KEPT OUR CHILDREN OUT OF THE CONVERSATION LONG ENOUGH, DON'T YOU?
"THE MAYOR WAS DUMB, AND THE COUNCIL STOOD..."
WHAT...?

"...AS IF THEY WERE CHANGED INTO BLOCKS OF WOOD."
NO...
"UNABLE TO MOVE A STEP, OR CRY..."
MY SON...
"...TO THE CHILDREN MERRILY SKIPPING BY..."
LEONARDO...
"...COULD ONLY FOLLOW WITH THE EYE."
NOOOO!
OH... YES.
"A WONDROUS PORTAL OPENED WIDE..."
"...AS IF A CAVERN WAS SUDDENLY HOLLOWED."

LEONARDO? I AM FREE.. I AM ABLE TO MOVE AGAIN.
DO YOU HEAR ME?
PLEASE, ANSWER ME..
"AND THE PIPER ADVANCED.."
MY SON?
"..AND THE CHILDREN FOLLOWED."
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO HIM?
"BUT AS FOR THE GUILDERS, WHAT WE SPOKE OF THEM, AS YOU VERY WELL KNOW, WAS IN JOKE."
GUILDERS? WHAT RIDDLE IS THIS, DEMON?
I ONLY SPEAK OF FAILED PROMISES, SIR..
OF YOUR CONSTANT FAILURE TO PROTECT YOUR CHILDREN.
HE'S RIGHT, YOU KNOW. YOU'VE FAILED US OVER AND OVER AGAIN. TALK, TALK, TALK... THAT'S ALL YOU DO ALL YOU'RE GOOD FOR.
NOTHING BUT EMPTY WORDS AND FALSE PROMISES.
WELL, I'M SICK AND TIRED OF IT.
NO, LEONARDO, LISTEN TO ME, I—
STOP. YOU MAY BE AFRAID TO DEFEND YOURSELF, BUT I'M NOT.
I AM NOT YOUR ENEMY, MY SON.
AH, DENIAL. YOU HIDE FROM THE TRUTH, RAT, EVEN THOUGH IT STANDS DIRECTLY IN FRONT OF YOU.
SUCH IS THE WAY OF FAILED FATHERS, I FEAR. UNTIL IT IS TOO LATE.
"THEY SAW 'TWAS A UNJUST ENDEAVOR, AND PIPER AND DANCERS WERE GONE FOR EVER."
ENOUGH OF YOUR INANE POETRY, MONSTER!
IT IS NOT TOO LATE! IT CAN'T BE!
KLANG
NO, FATHER...
...IT IS!
"POKE OUT THE NESTS AND BLOCK UP THE HOLES!"
"CONSULT WITH CARPENTERS AND BUILDERS, AND LEAVE IN OUR TOWN NOT EVEN A TRACE.. OF THE RATS!"
YOU'VE BROUGHT THIS ON YOURSELF, FATHER. YOU KNOW THAT.
I.. YES, I KNOW.
MY FAILURE TO DESTROY OROKU SAKI IS TO BLAME FOR ALL THAT HAS PASSED AND FOR ALL THAT IS TO COME.
BUT, I WILL ACT NOW, I PROMISE. I WILL DESTROY ALL OUR ENEMIES BEFORE THEY DESTROY US.
WHO SAYS THEY HAVEN'T ALREADY? THE DAMAGE DONE TO ME CAN NEVER BE UNDONE.
PLEASE, MY SON, I AM SO SORRY.
HMM... THOUGH I FIND YOUR GUILTY MELODRAMA GRATING.
I ADMIRE YOUR SINGLE-MINDED DESIRE TO PROTECT YOUR CHILDREN, RAT.
A VERY USEFUL TRAIT INDEED.
AND SO— THE FATHER'S MOVE IS FINISHED.

"...TIME FOR THE SON'S TURN."
FATHER?
FATHER... THE RATS I THINK THEY'RE.
...NOT ALL.
...GONE
NOT ALL, LAD.
THIS ISN'T HAPPENING AGAIN.
OH, BUT IT IS, CHILD THE TRUTH MADE PLAIN.
THE REAL MONSTER REVEALED.
MEWLING BRAT ALWAYS SO WEAK.
...ALWAYS SO AFRAID.
NO—STOP I WON'T LET YOU ANY CLOSER
"OH FOR A TRAP, A TRAP, A TRAP!"
WHATEVER YOU ARE, I KNOW YOU'RE NOT MY FATHER I WILL DEFEND MYSELF
PROVE IT
GRAAH!
SCHWP
UNGRATEFUL WHELP, YOU WOULD WOUND ME? YOUR OWN FATHER?
THAT WAS JUST A WARNING. AND QUIT PRETENDING TO BE MY FATHER— IT WON'T WORK.
BUT HE STANDS BEFORE YOU, CHILD... YOUR FATHER AS HE TRULY IS—A MONSTER!
NO... MY FATHER'S A GOOD MAN. DO YOU SERIOUSLY THINK I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON?
"MY SISTER'S HANDIWORK. THIS CHILD REEKS OF IT"
I KNOW WHAT YOU ARE—WHAT YOU'RE TRYING TO DO TO ME. TO US.
DO YOU, CHILD?
YEAH, I DO. YOU THINK YOU CAN MESS WITH MY HEAD, BUT YOU'RE WRONG
BECAUSE THIS TIME I KNOW EXACTLY WHO THE REAL ENEMY IS
RAHH!
"HE'S FORCED TO LET THE PIPING DROP..."
"...AND WE SHALL SEE OUR CHILDREN STOP"
FASCINATING MY SISTER EXPLOITED YOUR DOUBTS. NOW THAT DOUBT IS GONE, NOT TO BE USED AGAINST YOU AGAIN.
YOU'VE TURNED THAT WEAKNESS...
...INTO STRENGTH

FATHER?
I AM HERE WITH YOU, MY SON...
...AND WE ARE HOME, IT SEEMS.
HOW THE—? WHERE DID HE GO?
WHERE'S THE RAT KING?!
I DO NOT KNOW.
FATHER, YOUR ARM! BUT I THOUGHT—
MY ARM IS FINE, LEONARDO.
JUST AS I AM NOW THAT I SEE YOU ARE RETURNED TO NORMAL.
HE WAS TRYING TO BRAINWASH ME, FATHER... THE RAT KING. JUST LIKE KITSUNE DID.
BUT HE DID NOT.
INDEED.
YOU ARE LIKE NO OTHER CREATURES I HAVE ENCOUNTERED. A RAT WHO IS A MAN AND FATHER AND A TURTLE WHO IS A CHILD BECOME A MAN— MORE KNIGHT THAN PAWN.
THE GAME FOR THE WORLD HAS JUST BEGUN, AND MY OPPONENTS HAVE ALREADY MADE THEIR FIRST MOVES. REST ASSURED, HOWEVER, MY TURN WILL COME, AND WHEN IT DOES...
...PERHAPS I WILL LEAD WITH MY KNIGHT.
IN A MOMENT, YOU WILL NOT REMEMBER ME, BUT KNOW THIS...
...I WILL NOT FORGET YOU.

SO, UH... FATHER... YOU WERE SAYING?
UM... YES, ABOUT THE *PROMISE* I MADE TO YOUR MOTHER—
FATHER! WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR ARM?
I... I DO NOT KNOW.
ARE YOU OKAY? MAYBE YOU SHOULD SIT DOWN.
PLEASE, I AM ABLE TO STAND, MY SON. I FEEL NO WEAKNESS.
"AND NOW YOU'VE TURNED THAT WEAKNESS INTO *STRENGTH*..."
THAT'S IT.
MY SON?
FATHER, I *KNOW* NOW...

" I KNOW HOW TO BEAT SHREDDER "
THE SHREDDER, I PRESUME?
INDEED...
...GENERAL KRANG.

ART BY KEVIN EASTMAN
COLORS BY RONDA PATTISON

art by CORY SMITH

ISSUE #37

SOMEWHERE IN THE ATLANTIC OCEAN.
"YOU'VE CALLED THIS MEETING AND NOW YOU'RE HERE, SO LET'S NOT WASTE TIME WITH INANE PLEASANTRIES OR PRETENDING WE DON'T ALREADY KNOW EACH OTHER..."
...OROKU SAKI.
SO, YOU REMEMBER ME... IRON DEMON?
I REMEMBER ALL THINGS...
...SOME MORE THAN OTHERS. EVEN WHEN 300 YEARS SEPARATES US FROM OUR LAST MEETING--A TERM I USE LOOSELY, BY THE WAY.
INDEED.
SO, NOW THAT WE'VE GOTTEN THE WHO OUT OF THE WAY, LET'S GET ON WITH THE WHY. INTERNATIONAL WATERS GRANT US ONLY SO MUCH PRIVACY.
THE SOONER WE FINISH THIS BUSINESS, THE BETTER.
AGREED, GENERAL.
AND A BUSINESS PROPOSAL IS PRECISELY WHAT I AM HERE TO DISCUSS.

I'M CURIOUS— WHAT COULD YOU POSSIBLY HAVE TO OFFER ME?
NOT SOMETHING I HAVE, GENERAL, BUT THE PROTECTION OF SOMETHING THAT CURRENTLY BELONGS TO YOU.
AND WHAT MIGHT THAT BE?
BURNOW ISLAND.
HAHAHAHA!
YOU WOULD ACTUALLY CALL A MEETING ON MY SHIP, TAKE UP MY VALUABLE TIME JUST TO TALK ABOUT MY PROPERTY?
THERE'S GALL AND THEN THERE'S DAMNED GALL.
I DON'T KNOW IF I SHOULD TOSS YOU OVERBOARD OR SHAKE YOUR HAND.
STILL, I'LL ALLOW YOU THE CHANCE TO EXPLAIN YOURSELF—STRICTLY FOR MY OWN AMUSEMENT.
BUT ANY OF YOUR NINJA TRICKERY AND YOU'LL FIND HOW SHORT MY PATIENCE CAN BE, SHREDDER.
I ASSURE YOU, GENERAL, THERE WILL BE NO TRICKS...

"...I WISH ONLY TO TALK."
ALOPEX...
...ALOPEX... HERE...
...BEHIND YOU.
KITSUNE!
GRRRR...
BE AT EASE, CHILD...
...I WILL NOT HARM YOU.
WHAT DO YOU WANT, THEN?
ONLY FOR YOU TO LISTEN, ALOPEX. FOR YOU TO HEED MY WORDS.

I HAVE ALREADY TOLD YOU—A FOX MUST KNOW WHEN TO *WATCH*... AND WHEN TO *ACT*. THE TIME HAS COME FOR THE *LATTER*.
ACT? HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT? I *DID* ACT... AGAINST SHREDDER. AND NOW...
...NOW I'M ALONE.
YET YOU NEED NOT BE, CHILD. YOU HAVE ACTED, IT IS TRUE, BUT THE GAME IS *STILL* AFOOT.
THE PLAYERS CONTINUE TO GATHER...
...AND *YOU* ARE NEEDED AT HOME.
HOME?
YES, CHILD. YOU WILL NOT REMEMBER THIS TALK...
...ONLY THAT YOU MUST *RETURN* TO ME.
HUH?
WHAT THE...?
THAT WAS WEIRD.
"KITSUNE—THAT WAS THE *WITCH'S* NAME, WASN'T IT?"

YOU TWO WERE *THICK AS THIEVES* LAST TIME I SAW YOU.
K'TSUNE INDEED REMAINS BY MY SIDE, THOUGH OBVIOUSLY NOT AT PRESENT.
I FELT BY COMING ALONE, I MIGHT REASSURE YOU THAT I HARBOR *NO* MALICIOUS INTENT.
YOU KNOW, THAT'S FUNNY...

"...BECAUSE I DON'T RECALL K'TSUNE BEING THE ONE WHO *AMBUSHED* ME."

SO YOU'... HAVE TO EXCUSE ME IF I'M *LESS* THAN CONVINCED OF YOUR SINCERITY.
YES, WELL, THAT *IS* UNDERSTANDABLE CONSIDERING THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF OUR LAST MEETING. BUT I WAS PROTECTING THE BEST INTERESTS OF MY CLAN AND MY ACTIONS AGAINST YOU WERE *NEVER* OF A PERSONAL NATURE.

BESIDES, THAT WAS A DIFFERENT AGE AND MUCH HAS *CHANGED* SINCE THEN. WE ARE LIVING IN AN ENTIRELY *DIFFERENT* WORLD NOW... A WORLD I FULLY INTEND TO *RULE* IN DUE TIME.
WHEN I DO, I WILL NEED STRONG AND CAPABLE *ALLIES* STANDING AT MY SIDE.

AND *THAT* IS THE BUSINESS I HAVE COME TO DISCUSS, GENERAL KRANG.

I HAVE RECEIVED INTELLIGENCE THAT YOU ARE DEVELOPING NEW AND EXCITING *TECHNOLOGIES*.
"I WILL NOT GO INTO SPECIFIC DETAILS AS TO *HOW* I OBTAINED IT.
"SUFFICE IT TO SAY, HOWEVER, MY SOURCES ARE *EXTREMELY* RELIABLE.
"AND ALTHOUGH I *HAVE* BEEN ABLE TO SUCCESSFULLY UTILIZE MUCH OF THE INFORMATION—
"—I BELIEVE THERE REMAINS MUCH TO BE GAINED BY BOTH OF US SHOULD WE *COMBINE* OUR KNOWLEDGE AND, MORE IMPORTANTLY, OUR *RESOURCES*."

AH, SO WE COME TO IT, THEN—WHAT YOU'RE *REALLY* AFTER...
...MY OOZE.
"NEEDLESS TO SAY, IT'S SOMETHING I KEEP UNDER *RIGID* CONTROL THESE DAYS AFTER LOSING SOME TO YOUR '*INTELLIGENCE*'-GATHERING EFFORTS.
"AND IF YOU FOR ONE SECOND BELIEVE I DON'T KNOW EXACTLY *HOW* YOU 'OBTAINED' IT, SHREDDER...
"...YOU'RE *DEAD WRONG*.
"JUST AS YOU'RE *WASTING* YOUR TIME THINKING THAT *MORE* OOZE WILL HELP YOU AT ALL.
"EVENTS ARE IN MOTION THAT MAKE YOUR PETTY DICTATORIAL AMBITIONS *MOOT*. SOON EARTH WILL FALL AND *NEW UTROMINON* WILL RISE..."

...WITH ME AS ITS SOLE RULER.
YOU... YOU ACTUALLY BELIEVE YOU CAN RULE THIS WORLD?
NOW WHO DEALS IN GALL?
YOU MUST REALIZE, THIS PLANET WILL NEVER ACCEPT YOU, AN ALIEN, AS ITS LEADER...
...NO MATTER WHAT YOUR GRAND PLAN FOR CONQUEST MAY BE.
REALLY, SHREDDER— DO YOU THINK THAT MAKES ANY DIFFERENCE TO ME?
I'VE GOT THE TECHNOLOGY AND POWER TO ANNIHILATE ANY ARMIES THIS BACKWARD LITTLE PLANET DARES TO SEND MY WAY.
OH, THERE IS NO DENYING YOUR POWER, AND YOU MAY DOMINATE FOR A TIME, BUT HUMANITY WILL FIGHT YOU EVERY STEP OF THE WAY.
UNLESS, OF COURSE, YOU ARE ALLIED WITH THE FOOT.

WE WILL OFFER HUMANITY A LEADERSHIP THEY WILL RESPECT AND UNDERSTAND... AND WE CAN PROVIDE THE *PROTECTION* YOUR PEOPLE WILL REQUIRE IN THE NEW WORLD.
PROTECTION? *HA!* AS IF I WOULD EVER REQUIRE PROTECTION FROM *YOU*, WHO ONLY SITS IN FRONT OF ME TODAY BECAUSE *MY OOZE* HAS KEPT YOU ALIVE.
THAT IS TRUE—I WILL NOT DENY IT. YOU HAVE HELPED ME SURVIVE AND NOW I WISH TO *RETURN* THE FAVOR.
WE NEED NOT FIGHT EACH OTHER ANY LONGER, GENERAL.
INSTEAD, IT IS IN *BOTH* OUR BEST INTERESTS TO FORGIVE PAST TRESPASSES, JOIN OUR TECHNOLOGIES AND OUR NUMBERS, AND MOVE FORWARD TOGETHER TO BECOME THE MOST FORMIDABLE FORCE EARTH HAS *EVER* KNOWN.
HM. YOU'VE CERTAINLY SOLD *YOURSELF* ON YOUR LITTLE DELUSION, SHREDDER, HAVEN'T YOU?
AS FOR ME—THIS IS WHERE MY PATIENCE REACHES ITS *END*, I'M AFRAID.
NOW PAY CLOSE ATTENTION—THERE WILL BE *NO* ALLIANCE, *NO* PARTNERSHIP... *NO* FORGIVENESS FOR PAST SINS. THERE WILL *ONLY* BE NEW UTROMINON AND *I* WILL OWN ITS THRONE.
AND AS FOR YOUR LITTLE HUMAN UPRISING, YOU CAN *FORGET* THAT, TOO, SHREDDER, BECAUSE THERE WILL BE *NO* HUMANS, EITHER. I PLAN TO KILL THEM ALL...

...STARTING WITH
YOU!

IS HE DEAD, GENERAL?
DEAD ENOUGH. TAKE HIS BODY—I COULD USE A NEW SGT.
WHAT ABOUT THESE TWO, SIR?
SEND THEM TO JOIN THEIR DEAR DEPARTED LEADER, CAPTAIN TRAGG.
NO NEED, GENERAL.
SAKI?
BUT... HOW?
TRICKY NINJA... REMEMBER?
KLIK
BEEP BEEP BEEP

BLAM
BLAM
AM
SAK!! HE'S ESCAPING!
MASTER, RUN— ERRGGK!
BLAM
PILOT, READY THE HELICOPTER...
AS YOU COMMAND, MASTER.
...WE ARE LEAVING NOW!
GET UP, YOU STONE-HEADED IMBECILES!
THIS ISN'T OVER YET.
CHOOM

DID YOU *REALLY* THINK YOU WERE GOING TO ESCAPE, SHREDDER? YOU NEVER EVEN HAD A CHANCE.
AS YOU PATHETIC EARTHLINGS WOULD SAY, YOU SHOULD NEVER BRING A *KNIFE*...
...TO A *GUNFIGHT*.
YOUR HELO'S GONE, YOUR MEN ARE DEAD, AND YOU'RE NOT GOING *ANYWHERE* NOW, WHICH MEANS I CAN TAKE MY TIME WITH YOU. AND, TRUST ME, I *WILL*... AND YOU'LL LEARN WHAT SUFFERING *TRULY* IS.
REALLY, GENERAL, *YOU* OF ALL PEOPLE SHOULD KNOW...
...EVERY GOOD TACTICIAN RETAINS *OPTIONS* IN BATTLE.
CONTINGENCY PLANS TO TURN FAILURE INTO SUCCESS.
PREPARE TO MEET *MINE*.

GRAGH!
SKREEE
BLUDGEON...
...KOYA...
KSHSH
...COME TO ME.

TRAGG!
SKREE
UFF!
GRANITOR!
FZZARK
TAKE CARE OF THOSE FILTHY ABOMINATIONS.
I'VE GOT AN INSECT TO CRUSH.

COME THEN, GENERAL—IT APPEARS WE HAVE BUSINESS YET.
YOU'RE *DEAD*, SAKI.
YES, WE...
...IT WOULD NOT BE THE *FIRST* TIME!

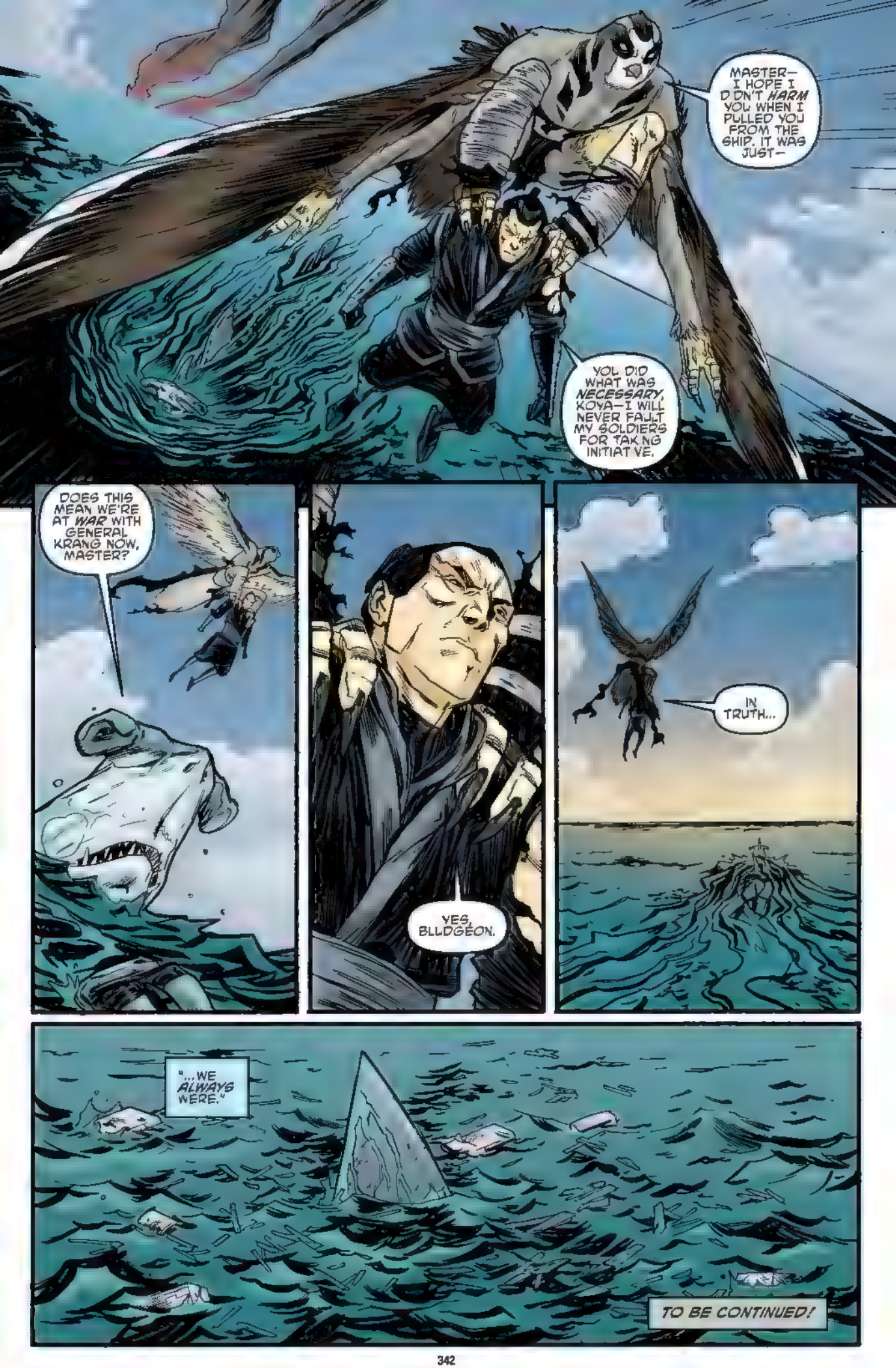
CAPTAIN TRAGG! WE REALLY GONNA LEAVE THE GENERAL ON HIS OWN?
HIS ORDERS, GRANITOR, NOT MINE. ANYWAY...
"...WE GOT OUR OWN PROBLEMS."
RIP THEM TO SHREDS, BLUDGEON! KILL THEM ALL!
YES, KOYA. THERE WILL BE NO MERCY!
FIRST YOU SEND THAT WENCH TO WREAK HAVOC ON MY ISLAND.
SHZAKK
THEN YOU HAVE THE AJDACTY TO ATTACK ME ON MY OWN SHIP!
KRAK
NEVER AGAIN!
KA BOOM

=KOFF=
YOU ARE MISTAKEN, KRANG. IT WAS YOU WHO ATTACKED ME.
RAGGH!
AND AS FOR MY GRANDDAUGHTER...
GAH!
...UNLIKE THE INCOMPETENT CRONIES YOU SURROUND YOURSELF WITH...
...SHE IS FULLY CAPABLE OF ACTING ON HER OWN.
GRAGGH!

IT'S JUST US NOW, SERGEANT!
NOT FOR LONG.
GRGKK...
GYAH!
YOU WILL PAY FOR THAT!
HUFF... HUFF... OH... HUFF...
...OH, NO.
CAPTAIN TRAGG!
THE SHIP...
...IT'S SINKING!
SINKING? NO...

"...THE MASTER!"
YOU WILL NOT LEAVE HERE ALIVE, SHREDDER!
I WILL DESTROY YOU! ALL OF YOU!
SHLINK
WELL, GENERA... I SUPPOSE THAT DEPENDS...
...ON HOW QUICKLY YOU CAN SHOOT.
SKREEEE
GJFF!
KOYA?! WHAT—
I AM SORRY, MASTER...

"...BUT THIS BATTLE IS THROUGH!"
FORGET HIM, GRANTOR! UNLESS YOU WANT TO FIND OUT WHAT IT'S LIKE TO SWIM IN THESE BODIES...
"...WE'VE GOT TO GET TO THE GENERAL AND OFF THIS BOAT!"
NO!
NO!
NOOOO!
SIR! SIR! WE'VE GOT TO GO! THE SHIP IS HISTORY!
KILL HIM! I WANT TO KILL HIM!
BURNOW COMMAND, THIS IS GRANITOR. ENGAGE EMERGENCY TELEPORTATION, OVER!
FOR THE ENTIRE CREW?!
NO, BURNOW...
"...ONLY THREE."
ROGER THAT. THREE FOR TELEPORTATION.
SHREDDER, DAMN YOU!
KOOM


MASTER— I HOPE I D'DN'T HARM YOU WHEN I PULLED YOU FROM THE SHIP. IT WAS JUST—
YOU DID WHAT WAS NECESSARY, KOYA—I WILL NEVER FAULT MY SOLDIERS FOR TAK NG INITIAT VE.
DOES THIS MEAN WE'RE AT WAR WITH GENERAL KRANG NOW, MASTER?
YES, BLUDGEON.
IN TRUTH...
"...WE ALWAYS WERE."
TO BE CONTINUED!

art by KEVIN EASTMAN
colors by RONDA PATTISON

RECOVERING FROM THE EVENTS OF "CITY FALL," THE TURTLES SEEK SANCTUARY IN THE COUNTRYSIDE, BUT QUESTIONS REMAIN UNANSWERED AND TENSION FESTERS AMONG THE BROTHERS. MEANWHILE, IN NEW YORK, SHREDDER TIGHTENS HIS GRIP ON THE CITY IN THEIR ABSENCE AND KRANG'S PLAN TO DESTROY THE EARTH IS RAMPING UP, BUT BAXTER STOCKMAN HAS PLANS OF HIS OWN.

VOLUME 4 COLLECTS ISSUES #29–37 OF THE ***TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES*** *ONGOING SERIES, THE* ***UTROM EMPIRE*** *MINI-SERIES, AND THE 2014 ANNUAL.*